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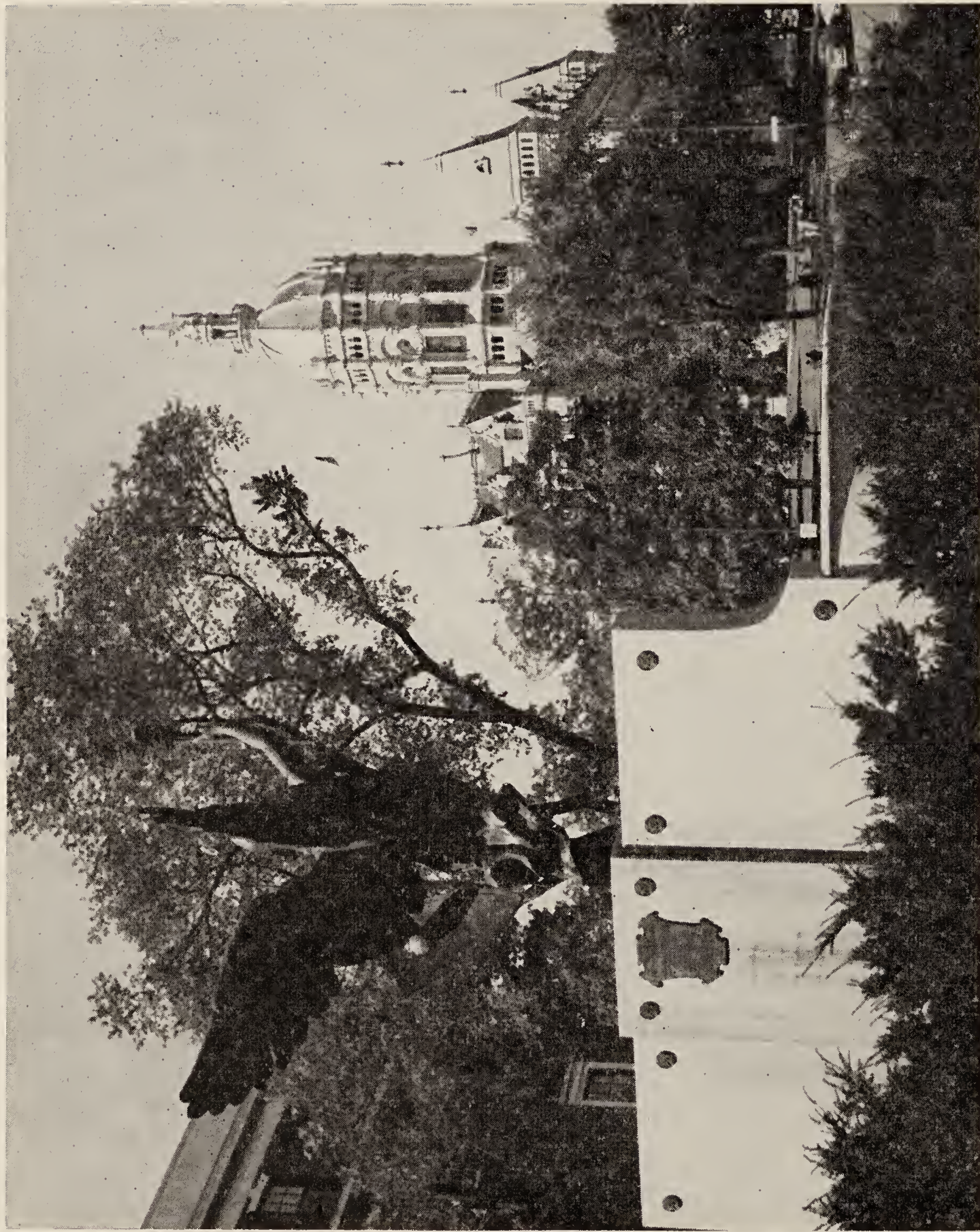
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HISTORY OF CONNECTICUT



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HISTORY OF^c CONNECTICUT

BY
HAROLD J. BINGHAM, Ph.D.

VOLUME II

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Chapter XXI

Education and Intellectual Development in the Early
Nineteenth Century

DISSENT, in the guise of a new liberalism, had achieved political success. Yet, after victory was achieved and adjustments completed, attitudes toward social reforms remained conservative. The *Hartford Courant* began the period as the defender of decadent Federalism and ended it as the organ of the still-born Whigs. The avowed liberalism of the *Hartford Times* never extended beyond a courtship of the ballot box. An intellectual barrenness was revealed in the sentimentality of the men of letters. This sentimentality pervaded the truncated humanitarianism which remained mindful of prudence in public expenditures and somewhat dubious of the ultimate perfectibility of man.

The common schools had continuously deteriorated since the establishment of the Common School Fund and the removal of the schools from the control of the ecclesiastical societies. The School Fund came to replace both state and local taxes for education. The state discontinued taxes for this purpose in 1821 and the towns shortened school terms to whatever could be paid for by payments from the school funds and collected no supplementary taxes.¹ After Congregational control was broken, no other group or institution assumed comparable responsibility. The influential elements of society turned from the common to the private school, divesting themselves of responsible interest and leadership. Those of the middle or lower income groups did not press for improvements in the cheap and inefficient schools. The Connecticut public of the 1830's, then, either ignored or tolerated an educational system which was cheap, extremely decentralized, and staffed by untrained teachers.²

Against this public indifference and in the face of the opposition of the radical and articulate Democrat John M. Niles of the *Hartford Times*, the beginnings of school reform were launched in the period 1825-37. Through the agency of such newspapers as the *Connecticut Observer* and the zeal of such teachers as William A. and A. Bronson Alcott, the cause of education was brought to the attention of the public. Societies for the improvement of the common school were organized in some of the counties of the state. These led to the organization of the Connecticut Society for the Improvement of Common Schools. By 1830, the friends of public education counted among its members some of the most respected members of society. These included Thomas Gallaudet, educator of the deaf and dumb; Horace Hooker of the *Observer*; Thomas Robbins, Congregational Minister; the leading members of the Republican-dominated General Assembly; and many others in addition to the Alcotts.³

This group based its appeal and its proposed remedies on the criticism of the common schools. They called for closer examination and certification of teachers, closer supervision by school visitors, increased flow of educational materials, and the establishment of a state superintendent of schools. The group campaigned for higher teachers' salaries, stressed the abilities of young women as prospective school teachers, encouraged regional teachers' meetings, and urged that the state require towns to increase funds for schools through local taxes.⁴ The Education Committee of the General Assembly recommended annually that steps be taken toward the improvement of the common schools, but none of the proposals were enacted before 1837.⁵ There had developed during the period, however, "a program, a philosophy, and a technique for school reform."⁶

There came to the fore one who was to provide the leadership and the inspiration which was to make educational reform a reality. Henry Barnard, with respectable family connections, a Yale diploma, orthodox religious affiliation, and moral and political convictions as to the importance of education in society, came to the legislature in 1837. He had spent the years after his graduation in teaching, gaining admission to the bar, securing a position of minor importance in the Whig party, and travelling in Europe where he gained direct knowledge of the educa-

tional systems there.⁷ Barnard supported the school reform bills submitted to the Assembly in 1837. The extent of educational progress under the Jacksonian Democrats who controlled the Assembly was the



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

HARTFORD—OLD STATE HOUSE, MAIN STREET

imposition of a requirement that school visitors file annual reports with the comptroller.^{7a}

When the Whigs, aided by depression fears, gained control of the state government in 1838, Henry Barnard was made co-chairman of the Education Committee. Through reports and correspondence he was able to supplement the information supplied by the annual reports of school visitors. Again, however, only minimum changes were recommended by the cautious committee. The Assembly approved only the suggestion that a Board of Commissioners of the Common Schools be

established. Although this agency was to provide the basis of Barnard's four year program of school reform, it offered no apparent challenge to established ways. The Board's powers were investigatory, not supervisory; the schools were to remain in the hands of the local school societies; and no new taxes were requested.⁸ After Gallaudet had refused the position as Secretary of the Board, Barnard was persuaded to assume the position.⁹

Barnard believed that the moral and civic justifications for school reform had specific implications for an industrial and urban society. He considered the relationship of a lack of education to crime and insanity to have been demonstrated and pointed to the existence in cities of a prevalence in both crime and non-attendance at school. This supplied a compelling reason, he argued, for the state to assume a greater responsibility for education, providing schools adapted to the needs of urban workers, "higher schools," evening schools, and separate schools for colored children in addition to improving the common schools.¹⁰ An attempt was made to establish a sympathetic public support for the crusade for improved schools by organizing county conventions to which the clergy and other friends of education were invited as well as those more directly connected with the schools. Barnard collected detailed information concerning the public schools and submitted to the legislature and public in reports, speeches, and in the *Connecticut Common School Journal*, which he edited and financed through his own personal contributions and those which he secured from a few affluent individuals. Barnard was attempting to persuade the public that the state should establish specific standards for the schools and provide financial assistance to enable them to be met.¹¹

Before 1842, Barnard did not advocate and the state did not endorse schools which were completely free. Because of conviction, as well as for tactical reasons, friends of educational reform were cautious about recommending novel methods of financing. They advocated compulsory local taxation to equal one-half of the amount received by the town from the school fund. Barnard recommended that dividends from the school fund be allocated on the basis of the number of children who attended school rather than in accordance with the number of resident children. However, he maintained that parents of children in school should sup-

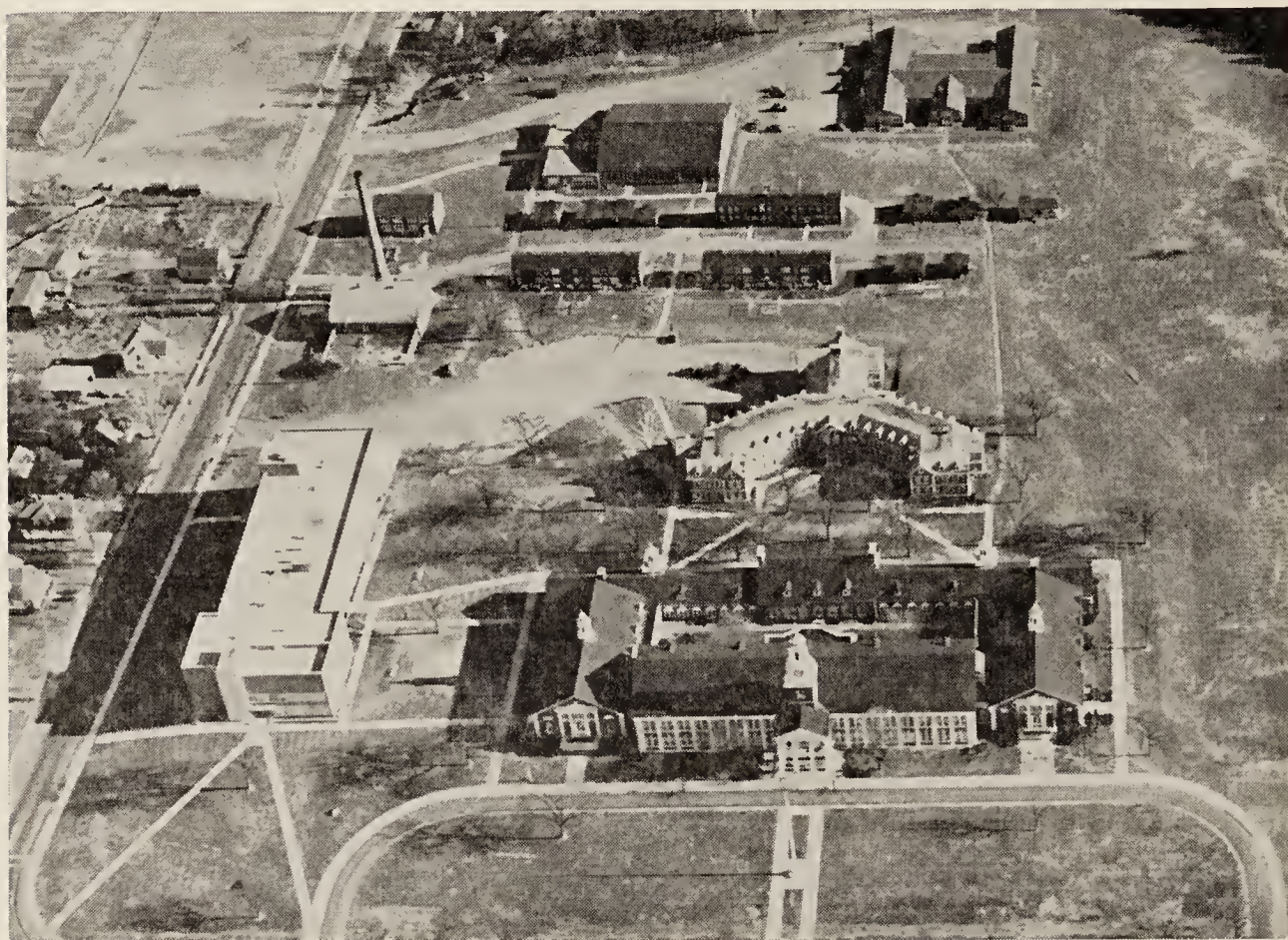
plement these sums by payments under a moderate rate bill, although no child should be denied schooling if his parents could not pay. A special subsidy was asked (and refused) for the purpose of defraying expenses of the *Connecticut Common School Journal* and payment of one dollar a day to school visitors was recommended (and made permissible). Reformers in general continued to avoid attempts to increase state expenditures or state taxes.¹²

The legislative program proposed by Barnard was designed to raise the standards of teaching and of teachers. The higher standards for teachers' certificates were to be enforced by the school visitors and uncertified teachers were to be prohibited from entering the classrooms. Teaching was to be made more attractive through higher wages and longer periods of employment and a degree of compulsion was to be provided by allowing School Fund dividends to be used only for teachers' salaries. Finally, a supply of competent teachers was to be made available through state support of teacher education.¹³

The proposed legislative program stimulated interest in education which resulted in some improvement in the schools. Although most of the school buildings remained unimproved, some were remodelled and three percent of the 1600 school districts constructed new school buildings. Although the use of untrained teachers continued to be usual, some communities apparently became more careful in their selection. Young women, a reservoir for teachers to which the school reformers had often pointed, were used to an increasing extent. Their salaries remained half the amount paid to men and school salaries in general remained low.¹⁴

The legislation which was finally enacted went only slightly beyond existing practice. Barnard's recommendations had been so diluted by the extremely cautious legislative committee on Education that the committee's proposals, except for appropriations for the training of teachers, passed without too much opposition. The control of the schools remained primarily with the local school districts. The existing requirements that annual reports be submitted to the Comptroller by school visitors and that School Fund dividends be used only for teacher salaries were continued. The law was strengthened, however, by the requirement that funds could be withheld if qualified teachers were not em-

ployed or if districts did not maintain a school for a four month period. Districts were forbidden to exclude from schools any child whose parents could not pay the tuition charge. The certification of teachers was more stringently controlled and their work was observed by the school visitors at least twice a year.¹⁵ The accomplishments were much less than



(Courtesy of the College)

NEW BRITAIN—CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGE

the school reformers desired and, no doubt, much less than Barnard envisaged as necessary to accomplish his concept of an adequate common school system. The program was as extensive as a traditionally economy-minded legislature would countenance. Even the limited alterations met the opposition of the radical Locofoco element of the Democratic party and had already activated the bitter pen of John M. Niles.

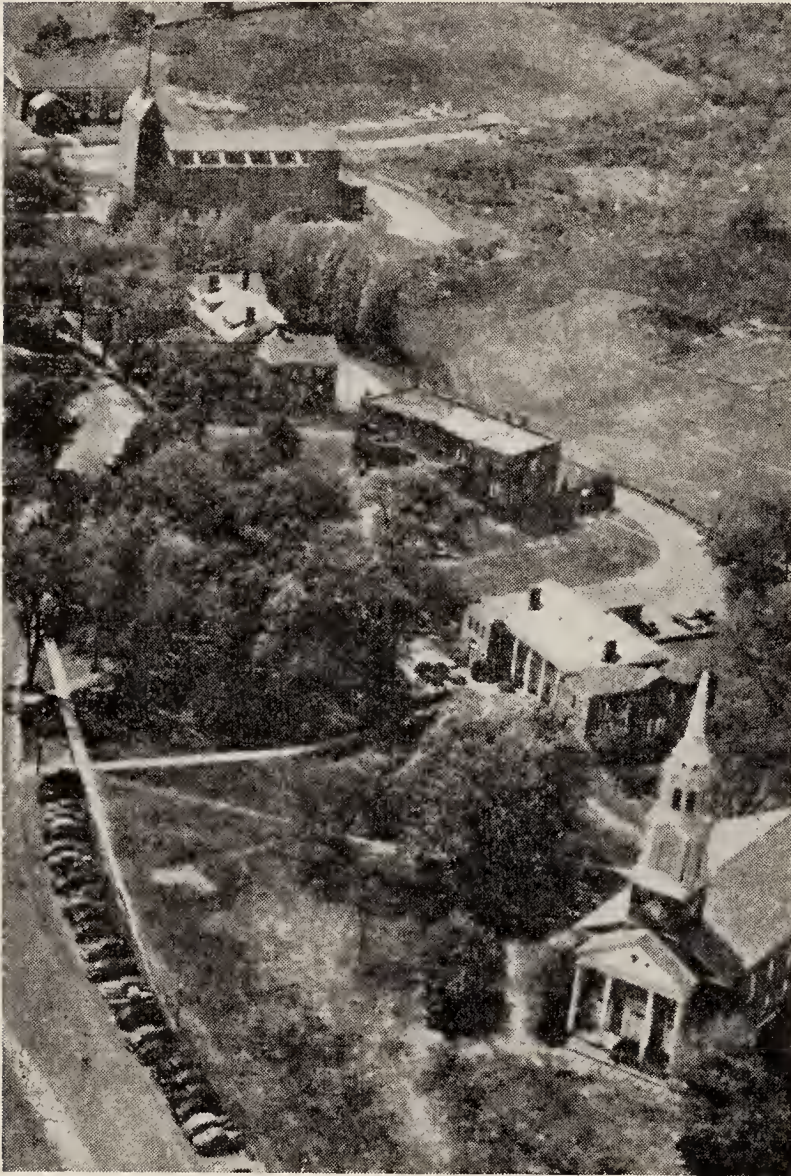
Opposition to the reform of the common schools was the vehicle upon which the Democrats were to return to power in 1842. The Whigs had followed a program of such strict economy that they had reduced

their legislative achievements to a near minimum. The reforms in education had not called for new taxes, for monies had been drawn from the general fund to cover the salary of the Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of the Common Schools and for related expenses. The Whigs, nonetheless, were characterized as the party of the aristocracy, of waste, and of high taxes. Point was given to these charges through an attack on educational innovations. Primary schools were portrayed as being for the common man, higher schools for the aristocracy. Funds spent for the unnecessary School Visitors and the Secretary should have been channelled to the support of the common schools. If monies derived from the School Fund were inadequate, they should be supplemented by tuition, not by a general property tax. The Whigs were charged with "trying to undermine the deservedly excellent reputation of the common schools in order to destroy the democratic 'little communities' of school districts and substitute an enormously expensive school system headed by one man in Hartford."¹⁶ A simple and sure answer to all these perplexities, it was suggested, was the election of a Democratic Governor.¹⁷

When, in 1842, the Democrats gained control of the legislature and elected Moses Cleveland, the champion of the common people, Governor, the school reform laws were repealed. Barnard's efforts were judged unsuccessful and unjustifiable. The Board of Commissioners of the Common Schools was discontinued, and Barnard removed to Rhode Island. In a single session of the legislature, two decades of efforts to improve the schools had been abruptly checked.¹⁸

A new opportunity to revive interest in the schools was provided in 1844 when the Whigs won a narrow victory. Friends of Barnard had kept the movement alive since his dismissal. Congregational ministers, such as Merrill Richardson and Horace Bushnell, urged improvement. Whig editors attacked "the brazen faced demagogues" who abolished "the wise and beneficent system of school education established by their more liberal minded predecessors."¹⁹ During the first year of the administration of the newly elected Governor, Roger Sherman Baldwin, the Whigs laid the basis for the revival of the school program by creating a special investigating committee of citizens appointed by the Governor to study the condition of the schools and to recommend plans for

improvement.²⁰ The 1845 session of the General Assembly acted favorably upon the committee's recommendation to reestablish a state office of school information and to restore to the school societies authority to



STORRS—CHURCHES, CHAPELS AND SYNAGOGUE,
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

employ school visitors. To avoid partisan attacks, Seth Beers, a Democrat, who had been Commissioner of the School Fund since 1825, was named *ex-officio* Superintendent of Common Schools. To allay fears that the program would result in increased taxes, the Commissioner was not allowed any increase in salary and was instructed to meet all expenses of his office out of the general funds.²¹

The new effort for school reform was aided by a resurgence of effort among the friends of education and a lessening of partisan differences on common school policy. The criticism of the Democrats was some-

what checked by the appointment of Beers as Superintendent, although, when the Whigs named an Assistant Superintendent, some of the old acrimony reappeared. When the Democrats met with success in 1846, Governor Isaac Toucey, bound by his party's position, recommended the abolition of the office of Assistant but did assert that the state should endure "any pecuniary sacrifice necessary to introduce any

well attested improvement" into the public schools.²² Although the two parties had moved closer together, the Assembly postponed until its next session consideration of the Education Committee's plan for the improvement of the schools. All agreed with Toucey's admonition that any successful move for the improvement of education would have to be "sustained by public opinion" and efforts had been resumed to develop a favorable public reaction. Under the leadership of James Bunce, railroad President, wealthy merchant, and campaigner for temperance and Puritan morality, efforts were again made to acquaint the public with the needs of the common schools. The philosophy of Barnard underlay and gave direction to the effort. The new spokesman was Noah Porter, Yale's new professor of moral philosophy, who added his own eloquence to the principles and ideas of Gallaudet, Hooker, and Barnard. A new periodical, the *Connecticut School Manual*, replaced the *Connecticut Common School Journal* which had been discontinued along with Barnard's office and services. Pressure was renewed for Institutes for teachers and a campaign was begun in Hartford for a high school. Plans were being evolved for state support of teacher education.²³ Clark Bissell's election as Governor in 1847 placed the Whigs in power which they held for three years, giving them this opportunity to reform Connecticut's schools.²⁴

In 1847, the Assembly hesitated to take action which might be in advance of public sentiment. Only a small sum was authorized to finance teachers' institutes throughout the state. A special committee was appointed, however, to formulate and report to the next assembly a detailed plan for a normal school for teachers.²⁵ This committee concluded that no longer could such a training school be considered experimental and of dubious wisdom. The committee recommended the establishment of a single normal school which would offer training to 220 tuition-free students for periods of 20 or 40 weeks. The proposal passed the House, but was defeated in the Senate. Apparently differences over the location of the school contributed to the defeat as well as a desire to find a way to finance the operation of the school other than by the general fund.²⁶

Meanwhile, the permanent support of teachers' institutes was approved and by the following year, another method of financing a

permanent normal school was proposed. For a number of years, banks seeking charters had been accustomed to paying bonuses which were used as state grants to educational institutions. It was proposed that the new state bank in Hartford pay a bonus of \$10,000 and the Deep River bank a bonus of \$1,000 for the support of a normal school. The Principal of the normal school would be *ex-officio* Superintendent of Schools. Students were to be instructed in methods. Those trained at the school were to sign an agreement of intention to teach in the common schools of Connecticut. With these provisions, and with the length of the term of training left to the discretion of the Board of Trustees, the measure passed in 1849.²⁷

Henry Barnard was asked to return to the state to assume the new position as Principal of the Normal School and *ex-officio* Superintendent of Schools. Middletown, Southington, Farmington, and New Britain contested for the school. The New Britain Educational Fund, an incorporated body consisting of 100 of the towns leading citizens, tipped the scale in favor of the burgeoning hardware city by subscribing \$16,500 for the normal school building and equipment. The village also offered to place all of its schools under the control of the Principal of the normal school.²⁸

Public attitude toward the common schools (had again become apathetic) and the continued deterioration of public schools was reflected in the steady growth of the academies. Practically every town of size had some type of academy. There are records of approximately 30 of all types which had been established in the state and most of these were in operation at the middle of the century. It is estimated that there were 10,000, or approximately 16 percent of the children of school age, attending these institutions.²⁹

The Academy was college preparatory and secondary in that it "taught not only the primary branches of learning," but also what were considered advanced subjects, such as geography, grammar, language, and advanced mathematics. As Dwight had implied earlier, the quality of instruction doubtlessly varied. There seems no question that some of the academies provided excellent instruction. Eligibility of students was not limited to the inhabitants of the town in which the school was located, nor were the members of the governing boards drawn solely

from local inhabitants. The students were regarded by their parents and by the academies as representing an elite. It is certain that tuition requirements limited enrollment to the affluent and that in the 1830's the academies were generally regarded as schools for the aristocrats. The best known of the academies, perhaps, were the Gunnery at Washington, the Bacon Academy in Colchester, and the Norwich Free Academy.³⁰

Seminaries for young ladies supplemented the academies. One of the best known of these was the Hartford Female Seminary founded in 1815. Under the guidance of Catherine Beecher from 1825 to 1833, this institution attracted from 120 to 160 out of state students. Other seminaries were established in New London in 1819, in Litchfield in 1827, in Norwich in 1829, in Ellington in 1840, and in Middletown in 1850.³¹ The seminary in Middletown was in the charge of the Reverend Josiah and Emily Field Brewer and had an additional five teachers, although three of these who instructed in French, art, and music, may have been part-time. Here the school year was divided into two sessions, one of eleven and one of thirty-one weeks, which began in May and in September. The students were arranged in general in two departments, the preparatory and the principal. A full course in each required two or three years, but could be modified to meet the wants of the individual. The curriculum included courses in mathematics, science, history, and English grammar and rhetoric. Training in music, art, or modern languages was available for an additional fee. Instruction in Latin and Greek was available but not required. Significant of changing concepts was the inclusion of bookkeeping as a course which might be taken. The seminary was designed to prepare a young woman for "the new paths of independence, honor, and usefulness opening to the female sex." The institution served the Middletown area primarily, but some of its students were from out of state with two from as far away as New Orleans.³²

In addition, there were schools which had been established for special groups or specific purposes. Among these was the Episcopal Academy of Connecticut which was established at the beginning of the century and reopened about 1830 after being closed for some time. This was intended as a "nursery of theological learning" as well as a preparatory school.³³ Others were the Connecticut Literary Institute of Suffield,

1835; Russell's Collegiate and Commercial School, New Haven, 1836; and the Cornwall Mission School. This last was an interesting attempt to "educate heathen youth" so that, with additional professional training, they would be able to go among heathen nations and communicate information which would tend to promote Christianity and civilization. The student body came from seven different Indian tribes and from several Asian countries and islands, including the Azores and the Marquesas. The school continued for more than a decade until the marriage of two young ladies to Indians aroused the prejudices of the community.³⁴

During the first half of the nineteenth century, reliance was chiefly on the private schools and the academies for higher education. The Hopkins Grammar Schools at New Haven and Hartford continued, but with the failure of the latter, the bequest was used to employ a classical teacher in the Hartford High School which had been recently begun.³⁵ These new schools for higher education were the beginning of a new development in public education which became increasingly important in the second half of the century.³⁶

The increased toleration which accompanied the fraying of the ties between church and state permitted the extension of opportunities for college education in the state. Perhaps, Yale had never been the arch-Tory institution of Republican charges, and, perhaps, it has ceased to be "the fountain head of the clerical party, nevertheless Congregational influence on the school remained strong during the early nineteenth century.³⁷ Yale instructors, for example, were then required to assent to the Saybrook Platform. Non-Congregational denominational groups were eager to establish additional institutions of higher learning.

Episcopalian effort to develop the Episcopal Academy into a college had failed to gain legislative sanction. After the Constitution of 1818 accomplished the disestablishment of Congregationalism, eighteen Episcopalian clergymen sought the incorporation of a school to be called Washington College which became Trinity. This name was chosen to dispel residual suspicion of Episcopalian patriotism. Congregationalists charged that the institution would be "an instrument of sectarian aggrandizement," and was a "scheme fraught with the seeds of discord" which would result in "a source of implacable feuds and jeal-

ousies." It was held that the new college could rise to a position of distinction and usefulness only by depressing Yale. As a final gesture by which it hoped to avoid the creation of another college, Yale repealed its requirement of the Saybrook oath on the day before the petition for incorporation of Washington College was presented to the House. A few days later, however, in May, 1823, the petition was granted.³⁸

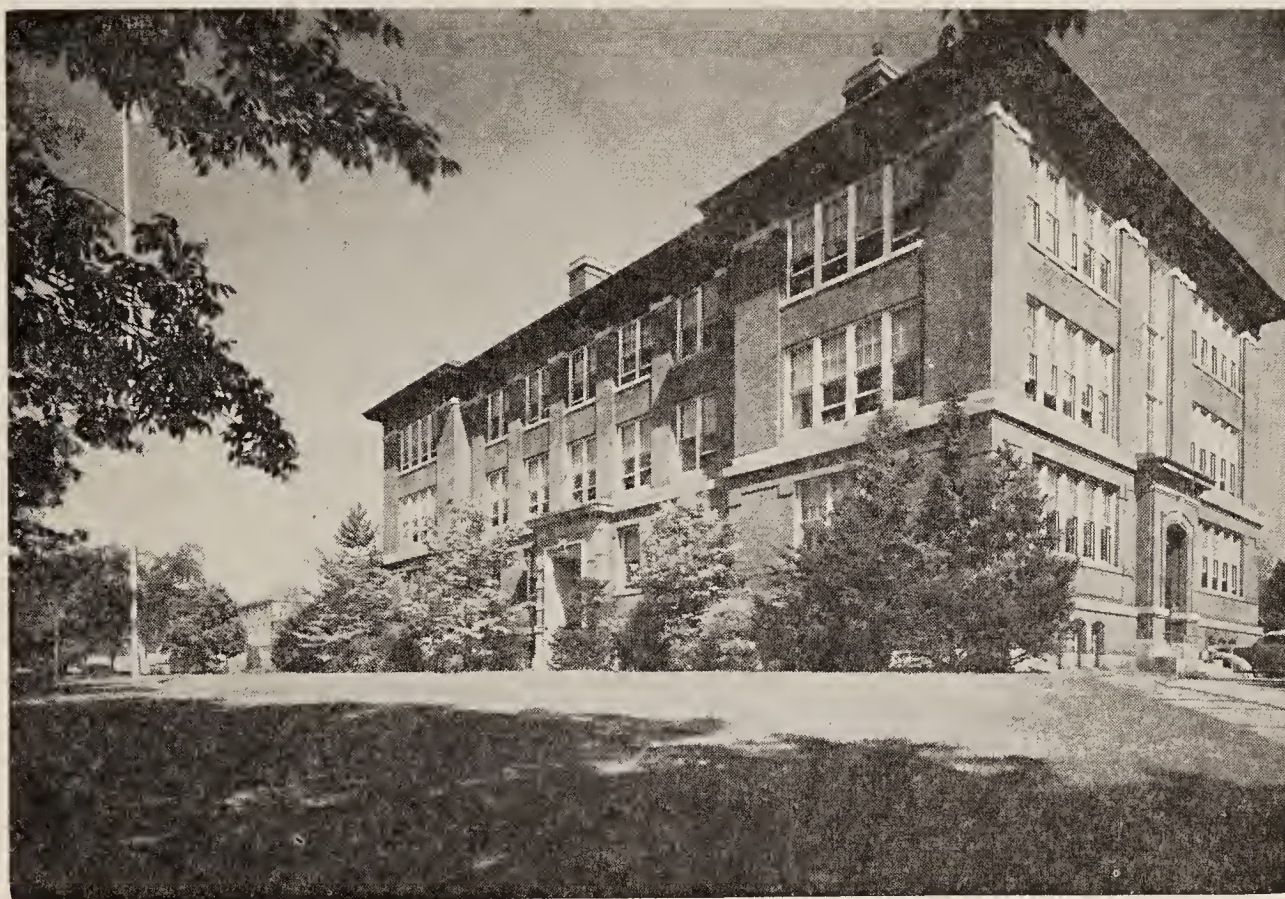
Early efforts of the Methodists to establish a permanent college had failed, too. When an opportunity to purchase the military academy at Middletown was presented in 1829, the Reverend Laban Clark assumed personal responsibility for the contract and later convinced the New York and New England conferences of the Methodist churches to assume the responsibility and subsequently in 1831 a charter was granted to Wesleyan College. Congregationalism was not dead when Wesleyan received its charter in 1831, but the state was committed to the principle of religious liberty. This meant not only the liberty of different religious groups to establish colleges, but also that religious tenets were not to be a condition for admission of students or a determinant of eligibility for the President, other officers, or the professors. Such provisions were contained in the charters of both Wesleyan and Washington colleges.³⁹ The narrow sectarianism, which had characterized Yale in an earlier period, was not permitted to become a permanent characteristic of Connecticut colleges.

Although chartered as private institutions, Connecticut colleges were the beneficiaries, not only of the religious bodies which petitioned for their establishment, but also of the communities in which they were located and of the state. Grants from the General Assembly aided Trinity (Washington College) and Wesleyan in their formative years just as they had frequently supplemented Yale funds. The city of Hartford raised in one year three-fourths of the \$50,000 required to establish Trinity. Middletown had offered the rents and profits of the two quarries belonging to the town in an attempt to have Trinity located in Middletown. When the news circulated that the physical facilities of the military establishment in Middletown might be used for a college, \$18,000 was raised by citizens before the end of the year and an additional \$10,000 was voted in town meeting to enable the town to secure the location of Wesleyan there.⁴⁰

The new colleges, unfettered by tradition or history, developed curriculums somewhat in response to the demand for the scientific and the practical. From the beginning, Trinity familiarized students with instruments used in surveying, and established professorships of chemistry and mineralogy, botany, and agriculture. The emphasis on the natural sciences at Trinity presaged the emergence of a modern Connecticut. Although Yale had instruction in the sciences since early in the century, it was not until 1847 that its famed Sheffield Scientific School was begun largely as a result of the efforts of Benjamin Silliman, his son, and John P. Horton with the approval, but without the support of the corporation.⁴¹ Meanwhile, the addition of law in 1824, the growth of the existing professional schools of medicine and theology, and the establishment of different schools within the college gave the school more of the characteristics of a true university. The emergence of the faculty as an important factor in the determination of college policy and the establishment of the alumni association in 1827 provided an impetus for further growth.⁴²

These efforts to increase the opportunities and to improve the quality of formal higher education were supplemented by a number of societies and agencies for self improvement. These were expressions of the forces of democracy premised upon a conviction of the importance of the common man and a belief in his ultimate perfectibility, and were springing up throughout the eastern part of the United States. Among the numerous organizations formed to "learn the learned more," and instruct the manual worker the Lyceum movement was outstanding.⁴³ A Yale-educated son of a prosperous Connecticut farmer initiated the American version of this effort at self-education. The degree to which Josiah Holbrook's efforts to establish the "Society for Mutual Education" was related to London's Mechanics Institute is not certain. Holbrook's plan for the American Lyceum appeared, significantly, in the *American Journal of Education*. The purposes were to provide for youths (apprentices and clerks) and economical and practical education, "to apply the sciences and the various branches of education to the domestic and useful arts, and to all the common purposes of life," and to diffuse rational and useful information through the community generally.⁴⁴ Holbrook envisaged an organization beginning with local so-

cieties and extending through county, state, and, perhaps, a national organization. Through lectures, demonstrations, and discussions, Holbrook sought to make opportunity available to all who cared to benefit from a practical education. Instead of choosing a Connecticut town as



(Courtesy Danbury Chamber of Commerce)

DANBURY—ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, DANBURY STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

the place in which first to try out his plan, he chose Worcester, Massachusetts.⁴⁵

Connecticut greeted the Lyceum movement with "pious apathy." It has been suggested that the impulses which established Connecticut's brand of theocracy and Yale's conservatism were the chief barriers to the Lyceum. An indifference to education, Yankee thrift, and a deep-seated aversion to change prevented the Lyceum from achieving in Connecticut the same degree of success it enjoyed in Massachusetts.⁴⁶

The Lyceum established in Connecticut was closely identified with the movement for the reform of the common schools. The Hartford Lyceum, for example, established before 1830, considered school text-

books and the qualification of teachers. Other societies with similar characteristics but a different name followed the same pattern. Inasmuch as Henry Barnard was the first President of the Young Men's Institute, founded in 1838, it is fair to assume that some of its debates were also concerned with the common schools.⁴⁷ It was in New Haven that the Lyceum movement most nearly achieved the objective originally intended by Holbrook. There eight young workingmen formed the Apprentices' Literary Association. In its first years it followed a pattern of debate and discussion. After two years the name was changed to Young Mechanics' Institute, and classes, which were more or less organized, were held in the practical subjects of arithmetic, geometry, geography, grammar, and bookkeeping. The Institute later attracted as lecturers some of the more civic minded of the Yale faculty, including Holbrook's old professor, Benjamin Silliman. A broader cultural appeal characterized the last phase of the institution's development and is indicated in the change of name to Young Men's Institute.

A strong, though short lived, stimulus to the Lyceum movement in the state was derived from the annual meeting of the American Lyceum in 1838 which was held in Hartford. Reports were received from more than twenty societies in the state and included the Norwich Lyceum and Mechanics Institute, the Goodrich Association of Hartford, the East Hartford Lyceum, that of Danbury and Litchfield. Also, the Atheneum, the Franklin Institute, and the Mechanics Society of New Haven reported. Interest in the Lyceum remained an important part of community activity in only three Connecticut cities. When, in 1851-52, Oliver Wendell Holmes appeared before half a hundred audiences in Massachusetts, he addressed only three in Connecticut—in Norwich, New Haven, and Hartford. After 1846, the Lyceum limited itself more and more to lectures. The Hartford Young Men's Institute remained strong, and its counterpart in New Haven continued to secure for its programs leading figures in the literary world. The later, also, continued to five courses in many subjects including drawing, music, and language courses for German immigrants. It continued to expand its services and occupied an important position in the cultural life of the city until the American Civil War.⁴⁸

Other institutions which were non-academic contributed to the

intellectual opportunities in the state. The Connecticut Historical Society was organized in 1825 largely through the efforts of Thomas Robbins, who became its Secretary in 1844. The New Haven Atheneum was organized in 1833 and the Wadsworth Atheneum of Hartford in 1842. The state reacted to the increased interest in science by beginning the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1818, the Hartford Linnean Botanical Association in 1825, and the Connecticut Society of Natural History in 1845.⁴⁹

Connecticut's literary production in this period hardly contributed to the intellectual strength of the state. The Hartford Wits had drawn but a partial picture of eighteenth century Connecticut, but not even that was attempted in the first half of the nineteenth century. The literature was not particularized by state consciousness and many of the literary figures of the period had associations with Connecticut yet can not be claimed completely by her. James Fenimore Cooper, Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, and Nathaniel Parker Willis studied at Yale. Mark Twain lived in Connecticut in his later years. Others, such as Amos Bronson Alcott or Fitz-Greene Halleck migrated from Connecticut to Boston or New York.⁵⁰ There was an abundance of writing in Connecticut in the early nineteenth century and the chief mode of literary expression was poetry. Yet, Stanley Thomas Williams in his brief review of *The Literature of Connecticut* failed to find a poet of first rank, or even of second. He considered the poets to be merely "imitators in the sentimental tradition" who rarely revealed true poetic talent.⁵¹

One of the imitators, however, Lydia Huntley Sigourney (1791-1865) was recognized for a half century as America's leading poetess. She was born in Norwich and early began "a long career of vacuous virtue."⁵² Her *Moral Pieces*, presented in 1815, was followed by numerous other books, all of which were sentimental, romantic, and moralistic. Posterity has not sustained her position of eminence and popularity. Of herself she wrote, in recognition of her own limitations, "If there is any kitchen in Parnassus, my Muse has surely officiated there as a woman of all work, and an aproned waiter."⁵³ Her popularity would indicate that she expressed the mood of the age and her poems serve as a key to its comprehension.⁵⁴

The most distinguished Connecticut poet of the period was Fitz-Greene Halleck (1790-1867). Except for the Wits, he was, perhaps, the most distinguished poet produced by the state at any time. Halleck was born in a house on the Green in Guilford. His father preserved a spirit of cavalier gallantry, his mother lived in strict accord with the Puritan tradition. Although Halleck transferred much of his affection to New York, where he spent his productive years, he felt a part of the New England temper and remained proud of the place of his birth and duly respectful of its citizens.⁵⁵ Poetry was for Halleck a way of life which by identifying him with the literati opened the doors of New York society. Perhaps, Bryant's tribute was as significant for its omissions as for what it said. In a brief obituary notice in the new York *Evening Post* he spoke of Halleck as "personally a most agreeable man, and one of the pleasantest companions in the world."⁵⁶

Halleck had won among the Knickerbockers a position as a wit which was not unlike that held by Washington Irving, principally because of his satirical verses, "The Croakers" (1819) and his humorous poem, "Fanny"^{56a} (1819). Halleck's "Marco Bozzaris," although amateurish, was forceful. Its popularity was based on the sympathy felt for the Greek hero who fell storming the Turkish camp in July, 1823, during the Greek struggle for liberty. Edgar Allen Poe correctly prophesied posterity's judgment when he wrote in 1846 that "Marco Bozzaris" had been surpassed "by many American and a multitude of foreign compositions of a similar character."⁵⁷ This criticism came twenty years after the poem had caught the public fancy, however, and Halleck had been able to revel in the glory. A more substantial and enduring composition was his poem on "Connecticut" which was written in two parts. The two parts were written in 1826 and 1852. The first was presented as a part of a larger unpublished poem, and appeared subsequently as one of two parts of the later poem. In this verse, Halleck combined denunciation and praise of Connecticut character in what has been considered a judicious appraisal.⁵⁸ Within a decade of his death, Halleck's poetry had been forgotten by contemporary critics and the public, yet a more modern critic has concluded that "there is still life and vigor in Halleck."⁵⁹

Until the publication of Bryant's second volume, James Gates

Percival was regarded as America's most distinguished poet. Then he abandoned verse because his books did not sell. He "hid from the world even while he begged for attention," and moved from position to position.⁶⁰ The stories of his life rival the material in his poetry. He was born in Kensington, orphaned at twelve, and handicapped by a defect in voice. At Yale, he posted verse on college buildings and awaited criticism; he purchased a pistol with which to commit suicide; he refused to admit Longfellow, who journeyed from Cambridge to see him; he lived in dirty rooms; and possessed the finest private library in Connecticut. He was immensely learned, and was a physician, botanist, chemist, linguist, and geologist, as well as poet.⁶¹

Percival possessed abilities beyond those of most of his contemporaries. He possessed a great imagination, a power of condensation, and an ability to handle varied forms, but he refused consistently to polish his verse. Three of his works, "Seneca Lake," "The Coral Grove," and "New England," are frequently reprinted in anthologies. His biographer is of the opinion that his best writing, however, has remained hidden in the longer poem "Prometheus." This poem of 274 Spenserian stanzas is described as "a darkly sententious, Byronic, meditative poem, in which he [Percival] slowly emerges from suicidal gloom into a mood of living."⁶² Although Whittier exclaimed, "We pity the man who does not love the poetry of Percival," more recent critics have viewed his lines as presenting "the materials, but not the finish of great poetry."⁶³ Nevertheless, he was, as Whittier said, "a singular and high minded poet."⁶⁴

An additional index to the intellectual activity of the state in the early nineteenth century is the number and quality of the newspapers of the time. In 1828, a visitor to the state observed that everyone read newspapers, which were to be found not only in every town, but in every farmhouse.⁶⁵ This may have exaggerated the literacy of the residents of the state, but it is true that newspapers existed in practically every town of any size in the state. In addition there were many papers devoted to special purposes, such as those published by the religious denominations. The *Religious Herald* was the organ of the Congregationalists, the *Churchmen* of the Episcopalians, and the *Christian Secretary* of the Baptists. There was, too, the *Catholic Transcript*. The

Workingman's Advocate, also, appeared in this period. The newspaper ventures were hazardous and often short-lived. In New Haven, for example, during the period 1818-1850, an average of about one paper a year was established and the fatalities were almost as great.⁶⁶ In the papers, much of the space was devoted to foreign or national events. Not until the 1830's, when the *Hartford Courant* announced that it was going to cover all important local news, could it be said that there was anything resembling a city press.⁶⁷

A number of families were identified with the newspapers of the period: the Greens with the *Connecticut Journal* of New Haven, the *Connecticut Courant* of Hartford, the *New London Gazette*, and the *Middlesex Gazette*; the Osborns with the *New Haven Columbian Register*; and the Burrs of the *Hartford Times*. There were brilliant and notable editors such as George Dennison Prentice of the *Hartford Times*, who later founded the *Louisville Kentucky Journal*, and Edward Bronson Cooke of the *Waterbury American*. Also associated with the Connecticut press were Gideon Welles, John M. Niles, John Greenleaf Whittier, Amos P. Wilder (later U. S. Consul in Hong Kong), and Orville H. Platt (later United States Senator).⁶⁸ The first half of the nineteenth century was an era of strident journalism, with the editors boldly identifying themselves with the causes for which they spoke.

The *Hartford Courant*, at the beginning of the century, was the bold defender of the Federalist cause, and at mid-century was vainly proclaiming the cause of the Whigs.^{68a} When it was under the control of George Goodwin and his sons, it styled itself "the advocate of correct principles and the friend and supporter of good order and good morals . . . a vehicle of useful information, of correct moral sentiments, and rational entertainment." It set out "to exclude everything unfriendly to virtue or offensive to delicacy." In politics the paper sought to "defend those doctrines and measures . . . believed to be identified with the stability and success of our free institutions."⁶⁹ When the newspaper was transferred to John L. Boswell in 1837, it remained firmly aligned with the respectable Whigs against the forces of mob rule. At mid-century it remained the organ of morality and staunchly opposed manifest destiny and the extension of slave territory.⁷⁰ Few would deny

that it fulfilled its objectives to an extraordinary degree, but there were opposition papers serving other purposes.

The Hartford *Times* came into being in the year of the Republican victory in 1817. It was the voice of change until the Republicans became responsible for action. The *Times* was published as a weekly until 1841, when Alfred Burr became the sole proprietor and instituted daily editions.⁷¹ With the whiplash pens of John M. Niles and Gideon Welles and the artistry of George Dennison and Whittier, it paraded as the true friend of the people. It waged journalistic warfare with the conservative journals, denouncing them "as organs of discredited aristocracy and a disestablished but unreconciled clergy."⁷² It considered its opposition to school reform as an expression of its democratic intention and judgments. Contact with progressivism was resumed when the Democrats gained control of the state's administration in 1833. The *Courant*, with some accuracy, referred to the *Times* or its management as the "Times Junto," the "Hartford Regency," and the "Locos."⁷³ Connecticut chose to follow a course which fell somewhere in between the propositions of the warring papers, but, by giving the citizens arguments upon which a choice could be made, these papers were discharging a responsibility of journalism.

NOTES—CHAPTER XXI

¹ Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," pp. 8-13; Steiner, *Education in Connecticut*, pp. 35-37.

² Steiner, *Education in Connecticut*, p. 146; Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," pp. 37, 46; 154-62; Odell Shephard, *Pedlar's Progress, The Life of Bronson Alcott* (Boston, 1937), pp. 86-100.

³ Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," pp. 56-71.

⁴ Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," pp. 53-88, 123-27; Morse, *Neglected Period*, pp. 147-48; F. B. Sanborn and William T. Harris, *A. Bronson Alcott: His Life and Philosophy*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1893), Vol. I, pp. 68-105; E. M. Gallaudet, *Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet* (New York, 1888), p. 239.

⁵ Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," p. 153; Morse, *Neglected Period*, pp. 147-48; Steiner, *Education in Connecticut*, p. 37.

⁶ Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," p. 153; Morse, *Neglected Period*, p. 148.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 148-49; Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," pp. 163-67; Steiner, *Education in Connecticut*, pp. 45-46.

^{7a} Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," p. 168.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 170-74.

⁹ Morse, *Neglected Period*, p. 149.

- ¹⁰ Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," p. 188.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 176-93; Morse, *Neglected Period*, pp. 151-53.
- ¹² Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," pp. 183, 193-99.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 199-200.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 218 ff.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 219 ff.; Morse, *Neglected Period*, pp. 152-53; Steiner, *Education in Connecticut*, p. 41.
- ¹⁶ Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," p. 227.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 225-38; Morse, *Neglected Period*, p. 154.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*; Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," pp. 234-38.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 240.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 245; Morse, *Neglected Period*, p. 155.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 155-56; Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," pp. 245-47.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 277.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 247-71.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 282.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 283-89.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 292-98.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 297-310.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 310-324; Morse, *Neglected Period*, pp. 158-59; Steiner, *Education in Connecticut*, pp. 43-44.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 37; Orwin Bradford Griffin, *The Evolution of the Connecticut State School System, with Special Reference to the Emergence of the High School* (New York, 1928), pp. 28-34.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-45; Morse, *Neglected Period*, p. 160.
- ³¹ Steiner, *Education in Connecticut*, p. 50.
- ³² *Middletown Female Seminary*, Vol. II, No. 1, August, 1853.
- ³³ Steiner, *Education in Connecticut*, pp. 56-59.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-65.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-52; Griffin, *Evolution of Connecticut State School System*, pp. 34, 37, 46-164.
- ³⁷ Purcell, *Connecticut in Transition*, p. 319.
- ³⁸ Steiner, *Education in Connecticut*, pp. 237-43.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 258-60; Karl Pomeroy Harrington, *The Background of Wesleyan* (Middletown, Conn., 1942), pp. 60-65.
- ⁴⁰ Steiner, *Education in Connecticut*, p. 152.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 183-89, 241, 261; George P. Fisher, *The Life of Benjamin Silliman*, 2 vols., (New York, 1866), Vol. I, pp. 248-93.
- ⁴² Steiner, *Education in Connecticut*, pp. 150-74.
- ⁴³ Morse, *Neglected Period*, p. 166.
- ⁴⁴ Carl Bode, *The American Lyceum; Town Meeting of the Mind* (New York, 1956), pp. 3-12.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52; Morse, *Neglected Period*, pp. 167-68.
- ⁴⁸ Bode, *American Lyceum*, pp. 135-36.
- ⁴⁹ Morse, *Neglected Period*, pp. 168-69.
- ⁵⁰ Stanley Thomas Williams, "The Literature of Connecticut," Tercentenary Commission of the State of Connecticut (New Haven, n.d.), pp. 2-3, 14-15.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁵³ Gordon S. Haight, Mrs. Sigourney, *The Sweet Singer of Hartford* (New Haven, 1930), p. 46.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. ix, 77-78; Williams, "Literature of Connecticut," pp. 16-17.

⁵⁵ Nelson Frederick Adkins, *Fitz-Greene Halleck: an Early Knickerbocker Wit and Poet* (New Haven, 1930), pp. 1-13.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 367.

^{56a} Williams, "Literature of Connecticut," p. 17.

⁵⁷ Adkins, *Fitz-Greene Halleck*, p. 164.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 165-67, 320-21.

⁵⁹ Williams, "Literature of Connecticut," p. 17.

⁶⁰ Henry R. Warfel, Ralph H. Gabriel, Stanley T. Williams, *The American Mind, Selection from the Literature of the United States* (New York, c. 1937), p. 368.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 368; Williams, "Literature of Connecticut," pp. 17-19.

⁶² Warfel *et al.*, *American Mind*, p. 368.

⁶³ Williams, "Literature of Connecticut," p. 17.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁶⁵ Morse, *Neglected Period*, p. 170.

⁶⁶ Osborn, *History of Connecticut*, Vol. II, pp. 57-189. Osborn includes a listing of Connecticut newspapers by county and city.

⁶⁷ J. Eugene Smith, *One Hundred Years of Hartford's Courant; From Colonial Times Through the Civil War* (New Haven, 1949), pp. 196-97.

⁶⁸ Osborn, *History of Connecticut*, *passim*.

^{68a} Smith, *Hartford's Courant*, pp. 139-157.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 177-206.

⁷¹ Osborn, *History of Connecticut*, Vol. II, pp. 67-68.

⁷² Bomhoff, "State Support of Teacher Education," pp. 153-54.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

Chapter XXII

The Rise of the Republican Party

PARTY POLITICS in Connecticut in the period before the American Civil War was characterized by a factious spirit. Reforms previously supported only in the pulpits of the ministers and in the parlors of up-lifters spilled into the political arena. The antagonism of the Congregational ministers toward Catholicism was assimilated in the nativist tenet of politicians.¹ After the rather abortive attempt to form a temperance party, the established Connecticut parties "turned to the question of Rum or no Rum," as both the Whigs and the Democrats made overtures for prohibitionist support.² The issues of expansion and the suggested Wilmot Proviso brought slavery into the center of political argument.³ Temperance, nativism, and abolition were divisive issues which severed old party allegiances and established new ones. Major parties modified their positions in an attempt to attract the dissidents of other parties, mollify factions within their own, and hold the support of their faithful. New parties were formed by those who found these modifications insufficient. Eventually, out of the shifting political sympathies, there appeared a new banner, that of the Republican Party, under which the majority could stand.

Earlier, however, in 1848, it was the emergence of the Free Soil Party which threatened the position of both the Whigs and the Democrats. The latter divided on the issue of slavery in February, 1849. One faction held to the view that ". . . Congress has no power . . . to interfere with or control the domestic institutions of the several states. . . ."⁴ The other contended that the party should attempt to win back Free Soilers by incorporating the provisions of the Wilmot Proviso in the Democratic platform. Democratic embarrassment was complete in

1849 when John Niles, one of the founders of the party in Connecticut, announced his willingness to run on the Free Soil ticket.^{4a} With the passing of Andrew Jackson, the Whigs had lost some of the political cohesiveness supplied by that popular hero, and, when the party re-



(Courtesy Mills Coll., Conn. State Lib.)

NORTH CANTON—POST OFFICE, BUILT IN 1800

nounced the Wilmot Proviso in 1848, some of its number, too, fell from the ranks of the party and joined the Free Soilers. Although the Free Soil party was not successful in naming a Governor, it frequently held the balance of power in political contests.

On local issues the Free Soilers were apparently motivated by political expediency, but they were steadfast in their opposition to the extension of slavery. The 3,000 votes John Niles polled in 1849 forced the selection of a Governor into the General Assembly. That year the

Whig candidate, Joseph Trumbull, was named Governor. The next year, when once again the choice was up to the Assembly, a Free Soiler-Democratic coalition resulted in the selection of the Democrat, Thomas H. Seymour. The parties could not agree, however, on a successor to Senator Roger S. Baldwin, whose term was to expire. Baldwin, a Whig, in the opinion of the Free Soilers was not sufficiently strong in his opposition to slavery. The Democrats, on the other hand, who would have accepted Baldwin, would not consider sending a Free Soiler to the national Congress. The schism resulted in a postponement of the election for a year and meant that Baldwin would remain in office until 1850. More significantly, Democratic willingness to accept Baldwin indicated that a degree of Free Soil sentiment prevailed among those not formally aligned with the party.⁵

Webster's Seventh of March speech in support of the Compromise of 1850 raised consternation in the minds of the Connecticut Whigs. It is not clear, however, whether the concern was because of the principle or because of the possible effect. Mrs. Baldwin, in writing to her husband, deplored the fact that reaction to Webster's speech might cause numbers to turn to the Free Soilers and the Democrats of the state. The opposition was quick to attempt to take advantage of this apparent defection from opposition to slavery in the ranks of northern Whigs.⁶

The resolution adopted by the General Assembly in March, 1850, supported the Compromise provision for the elimination of slave trade in the District of Columbia and supported the abolition of slavery there. Instead of accepting the principle of squatter sovereignty, the resolution opposed the extension of slavery into the territories and the admission of new slave states. Whereas the Compromise called for a stricter fugitive slave law, the Connecticut Assembly had proposed that Congress pass legislation to prevent the illegal seizure of any person as a fugitive slave. The question of consistency here hung on the word "illegal." Senator Baldwin interpreted the resolution as support for the Compromise. When speaking to friends the following December, he stated that although he had stated that he, himself, could not support the Compromise, he felt authorized "by the nearly unanimous resolution of the General Assembly to declare in behalf of the people of Connecticut that they were prepared to adhere to and abide by all the

compromises of the constitution to the letter and in the spirit of the same.”⁷ Implicit in the Connecticut resolution, however, was a conviction that any seizure of a person as a slave was illegal. It would follow that any enabling legislation would be unconstitutional, and this would permit the obstruction of the law without the sacrifice of legalist convictions.

The Churchmen based their position on the existence of a higher law, an absolute law. The Congregational organ, *The Independent*, was utilized to advise disobedience to an evil law and to contend that this would be true to the teachings of Puritans and nonconformists as well as to the teaching of the apostles. Fugitives were advised to avoid violence, but to prepare for defense. In the event of capture, it was suggested that fugitives join some secret society of fugitives before leaving the north and render themselves of less than no value to their masters on their return. Disobedience was presented as obedience to God rather than to man in conformity with a “higher law.” When those who supported the fugitive slave law replied that they knew “of no higher law, as a rule of political action, than the Constitution of the United States,” Leonard Bacon held steadfastly to the position that “the conscience rules supreme.” “We may yield obedience to the Constitution though it deprive us of our rights,” he said, “but not when it violates our duty.” Bacon’s position was given greater weight because he had opposed William Lloyd Garrison, which gave an illusion of moderation to his position. The clergy, however, had, in fact, assumed a more radical position.⁸

Apparently, the ministers spoke only for a minority of Connecticut’s citizenry in 1850. There were economic interests in the state, insurance companies and carriage manufacturers, who were loath to permit social issues or political action to interfere with their lucrative southern markets. The Democrats, in their state convention in February, 1851, resolved that they had no sympathy “with those who to evade the constitution appealed to a higher law” and reaffirmed their support of the fugitive slave law.^{8a} The Whigs, who desired to prevent discord within their own ranks, went no farther than to request a modification of the fugitive slave law, while recognizing the provisions of the constitution as obligatory and binding. The day had not yet come

when Connecticut citizens would forsake their separate political allegiances and join in force against the "peculiar institution."^{8b}

Temperance assumed a greater importance in Connecticut life in the period before 1854 than did slavery. The defense of regulation by the temperance leaders of the thirties had developed into an advocacy of prohibition. Senator Baldwin was warned in 1850 that, because he served wine, it would be impossible for him to be elected to any office in Connecticut.⁹ The prohibitionists eschewed direct party action and sought, instead, to commit the established parties to their principles. When, in June 1851, Maine passed its law prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating beverages for other than medicinal purposes, the temperance question reached new heights.¹⁰ A state wide temperance convention, which met in March 1852 and was attended by from four to five hundred persons, endorsed the Whig candidates, when the head of their ticket pledged himself to sign a law similar to the Maine Law if it were passed by the Assembly. No temperance man, the convention held, could support the Democratic candidate, Thomas H. Seymour, who refused to respond to a request to identify his position on the liquor issue.¹¹ The election returns indicated that the Democrats had judged the wishes of the constituency correctly. For the first time in three years, the Democrats elected their candidate for Governor by popular vote and gained control of both houses of the General Assembly by large majorities. The Democrats held to the principle that prohibition violated the principles of individual liberty. The response of the electorate again in 1853 indicated that this principle would not be renounced until other issues obscured it. Connecticut began its ten year experiment with prohibition in 1854, although several dissenting persons laid in a long term supply and the *Hartford Times* lamented the banishment of everything "stronger than molasses and water."¹²

Concurrently with the temporary solution of the temperance issue, another equally divisive matter of social concern was being debated. The increased number of Irish immigrants gave point to the anti-Catholic, anti-foreign sentiment within the state. The attempt to organize a nativist party had subsided in 1848, but anti-foreign sentiment persisted.¹³ Some regarded Catholicism a threat to Yankee Puritanism. Leonard Bacon, in a sermon to the American Home Missionary

Society, in 1850, viewed the Catholics as hostile to "all that we value for ourselves, or hope to have in behalf of our children." Others understood that the main challenge was the assimilation of the new stock into Connecticut's culture.¹⁴ The poverty of the immigrant was the chief point of attack. Although the census of 1850 shows that only 281 of the 1,464 paupers supported in Connecticut by the state were of foreign birth, the *Courant* maintained that they were sapping the resources of the state. The foreign-born were concentrated in the larger towns, and, it is true, many of them were forced to seek relief when there was wide unemployment during the winter months of 1854. The *Courant* reported that \$2,000 of a \$3,800 charitable fund raised in Hartford was given to Irish families. On the other hand, the *Times* pointed out that the Irish would make good citizens and were a valuable addition to the labor force. "Our railroads and canals are due not less to the bone and sinew of Irishmen, than to the capital and enterprise of Americans."¹⁵ The increasing number of immigrants projected them into the state's politics.

Opposition to anti-foreign sentiment developed to parallel the articulation of antagonism. During the state campaign in 1852, the *Courant*, previously nativist, attacked the Democrats of New Hampshire for endorsing a religious test for office holding.^{15a} Each party attempted to hang a nativist tag on the principal opposing candidate, Winfield Scott or Franklin Pierce. The Irish, in particular, were wooed, and attention, for the first time, was paid to the German vote in the state. The success of the Democrats in both the state and national elections was attributed, in contemporary opinion, to the foreign vote. Shortly after the election of Pierce, the *Courant* noted that one of the causes of the Whigs' defeat was "the steady increase in the Democratic vote for the last ten years, principally from the accession of naturalized citizens."¹⁶ Three years after the election, a nativist wrote that previous political successes had depended upon the foreign vote which held the balance of political power.¹⁷

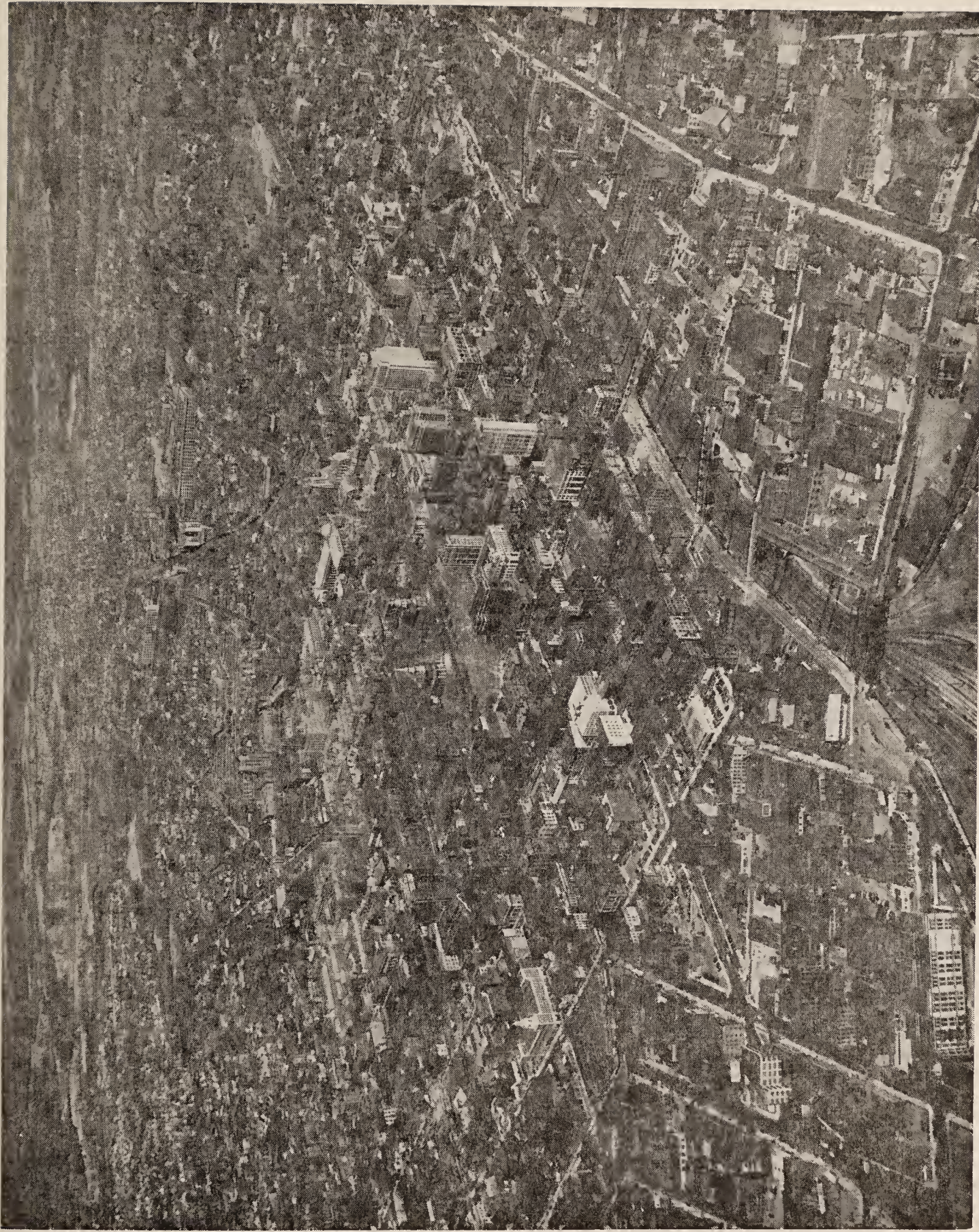
In any case, the Whigs suffered in the campaign of 1852. In Connecticut, Pierce polled only a plurality of 3,000 votes out of the total of 63,000 cast in the state; the Whigs were routed on a national level. Webster's Seventh of March speech had embarrassed the party, and the

serious defections which had developed because of the fugitive slave law were revealed in the elections of 1850 and 1851.¹⁸ The clergy had to a great extent forsaken the Whigs for the Free Soil Party which stood for prohibition and clearly opposed the Fugitive Slave Law.¹⁹ In 1852, the Whigs, still to be reckoned with on the state level, had sought to improve their position by purging the party of all previous nominees who were committed to the support of legislation to parallel the Maine prohibition law. Henry Dutton of New Haven was chosen to head the ticket and was instructed to give no pledges on temperance. The reelection of the Democrat, Thomas H. Seymour, did not come as a surprise, but the loss of about 8,000 votes by the Whigs revealed the serious condition of the party.²⁰ The Whigs were never again to be an effective political force, but they found common ground upon which to unite with other parties against the Democrats when Stephen A. Douglas proposed the Kansas-Nebraska Bill in January, 1854.

Congregational ministers, under the leadership of Leonard Bacon, sparked a great moral crusade. "In the name of millions . . . as he would answer to his fellow men and to his God," Bacon implored Isaac Toucey, a Democratic Senator from Connecticut who supported the bill, "to consider the enormity of the political crime he was committing in furthering this bill."²¹ Bacon held an enthusiastic audience for two hours in New Haven and then stumped the nearby towns. In Hartford, Horace Bushnell "advocated resistance even to the point of revolution."²² The *Independent* carried repeated editorials, and a memorial from 3,000 New England ministers was forwarded to Washington in protest to the measure.²³

The slavery question, which had shared importance with other issues, if, indeed, it had not been obscured by them, in the period 1850 to 1854, surged to the fore as the most important political issue of the period. The political effects of the issue, as pin-pointed by the Kansas-Nebraska bill, were far reaching. It provided the final blow to the Whig Party, contributed to the split within the Democratic Party, provided a base for the rise of the Republican Party.²⁴

The immediate effect of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was the division which it forced in the Democratic Party. While avoiding a resolution which forthrightly expressed opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Bill,



NEW HAVEN

(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

the Democratic Party, at its meeting in Hartford, expressed its confidence that the existing legislation was best suited to maintain and perpetuate the union. When the campaign opened, anti-Nebraska meetings were held throughout the state. Because of his support of the Bill, Isaac Toucey was hung in effigy in the state's cities, as Democrats joined with Whigs and Free Soilers in the demonstrations. The Free Soilers were quick to convert the moral question to political advantage. With apparent deliberateness, one campaigner wrote that he would "hold a meeting in Hartford in the evening on the moral aspects of slavery" and on a subsequent evening "would make a strong Anti-Nebraska, Anti-Administration Free Democrat talk . . . [*sic*]." ²⁵ The Kansas-Nebraska Bill provided to the Whigs, Free Soilers, and Prohibitionists a common cause. The Democrats were aware that the coalition might throw the election into the Assembly and encouraged loyalty to the party in voting for members of the legislature. Samuel Ingham, the Democratic candidate, scored sizable victories over each of the other candidates. However, he failed to receive a majority of the total vote. The coalition parties had gained a preponderant majority in both houses, and the General Assembly named Henry Dutton, the Whig, to office. ²⁶

The far-reaching social and political implications involved were realized only gradually as the issue continued to agitate the country and to be coupled persistently to the Kansas-Nebraska Act. ²⁷ In its May session, the General Assembly responded to the Governor's request and condemned the legislation, censured Isaac Toucey, and indicated that Connecticut did not mean to submit to the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The Assembly proceeded to pass legislation intended to render the Fugitive Slave Law inoperative. This "Act for the Defense of Liberty in this State" provided that "any person, who shall falsely and maliciously pretend that any free person is a slave, intending to remove him from Connecticut, shall pay a fine of \$5,000 and be imprisoned five years in the State Prison." ²⁸ The burden of proof of slavery was placed upon the claimant, who was required, in addition to any other evidence, to produce two witnesses in court to identify the person as a slave. The Assembly, knowing that free negroes had been captured and sold into slavery and that false claims had been made to secure

rewards, had enacted legislation which established a presumption in favor of the freedom of every colored person in Connecticut.

This same political body which championed human freedom passed a law prohibiting the manufacture and sale of spirituous liquors. The fervour of moral crusaders was then channelled into a new party, the Know Nothings, as attention turned to nativism, which was anti-foreign and anti-Catholic. The party was non-committal on the slavery question and even suspect to charges of being pro-slavery in effect, yet in spite of the anti-slavery spirit of Connecticut the party grew rapidly.²⁹ This party, which was devoted to excluding all but native born Protestants from public office, was begun in Connecticut in 1853. It exerted no apparent influence in the state election of 1854, but attracted attention in the Summer of that year when Chauncey Jerome, the clock-maker, polled 70 per cent of the vote in the race for Mayor of New Haven and led a Know Nothing ticket to achieve domination of the city council. In short order, the Know Nothings captured the local governments in 20 towns and, by an artful arrangement with the Whigs, exercised effective control in 28 others.³⁰ Political ears turned toward Hartford as time approached for its city election. There was such a profusion of political sympathies, such shading of political interests, such cutting of party tickets, that the political principles endorsed by the success of the elected candidates were not easily discernible. It was clear, however, that the Democratic control of Hartford had been superseded by that of a coalition dominated by the Know Nothings. These local successes inevitably suggested the possibility of success in a state election.³¹

Politicians who measured a political party by its ability to attract votes, saw in this anti-foreign, but otherwise loosely committed, organization an opportunity for political success. The party principles were general enough to attract elements of the Temperance, Free Soil, and Whig groups. Leaders, practised in Connecticut politics, such as William Minor, Charles Dutton, and James Dixon, eagerly made their knowledge available to the new party in order to ride on its crest of enthusiasm. State meetings in November 1854 and February 1855 solidified the organization and explored the possible nominees for the gubernatorial campaign in 1855. The strength of the party was indicated

by the report that there were 20,000 members in its 169 lodges in the state. As the *Courant* remarked on the eve of the election, the party was "making sweeping headway."³²

The only success of the Know Nothing Party in Connecticut was in the election of 1855. The five parties, the Democrats, Whigs, Free Soilers, Know Nothings, and Temperance, nominated or endorsed three candidates. Samuel Ingham reversed his decision not to run and led the Democrats against mounting opposition. The Know Nothings chose an established Whig, William T. Minor, who was, also, endorsed by the Temperance Party. The remnants of the Whig Party split on the desirability of joining with the Know Nothings, but the diehards insisted that the independence of the Party should be maintained and proposed the nomination of Henry Dutton. Dutton, himself, symbolized the closeness of the two parties. Previous to the selection of Minor, Dutton had been reported as the choice of the Know Nothings. In fact, he had to resign from their secret order to campaign for the Whigs. The Whigs and Know Nothings supported the same Congressional candidates and for the most part the same candidates for the state legislature. The Democratic candidates for Congress were defeated and Ingham did not secure a clear majority. He received 27,000 votes, of which it was estimated that 7,000 were cast by Whigs who disapproved of their party's stand on prohibition. Minor, the Know Nothing candidate, was elected Governor by the coalition forces in the General Assembly.³³

All other issues in the 1855 session of the Assembly were subordinated to the single all-important question of nativism. The Assembly maintained a timorous attitude toward the slavery issue. Action was confined to a reiteration of opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Bill and to a request for repeal or modification of the Fugitive Slave Law. Efforts to secure a more forceful resolution failed. In response to the Governor's request "to restore our government to its primitive purity,"³⁴ the legislators required that each church property be held by an individual congregation. This voided the practice of the Catholic church's holding land in its own right or through its canonical system of land holding by the Bishops. Laws forbidding state courts to naturalize aliens and a proposed amendment to the constitution to limit suffrage to those able to read and write completed anti-alien legislation. After

the Assembly adjourned and despite the protest of the Adjutant General, the Governor extended the anti-foreign action by disbanding six foreign regiments in the state militia. The literacy test was accepted by the people by a vote of 17,657 to 12,816 and was formally proclaimed as a part of the state's constitution in November of the same year.³⁵

The equivocal position of the Know Nothings on the slavery issue was the beginning of the end of the national party. In an effort to buttress the party against anti-slavery commitments, there had been approved at a national convention in Cincinnati, in November, 1854, a so-called Union Decree, which called for its candidates to pledge an unswerving loyalty to the Union. It was a "bid for the conservative element of the nation," but was interpreted by the anti-slavery forces as evidence of southern domination.³⁶ When the national delegates met in Philadelphia the following June, the slavery issue could not be repressed, and when, after days of wrangling, the convention accepted the pro-slavery plank of the platform committee, the anti-slavery forces of the North, including the Connecticut delegation, seceded from the convention. Their action, applauded by the *Courant* and supported by the State Council of the party, forced a redefinition of the party's position.³⁷

The tenets of the national party were modified in the light of Connecticut opinion prior to the 1856 campaign. The new articulation of an anti-slavery stand gained, no doubt, some new adherents. At the same time, it would seem, the position cost some of the support of those Whigs who were intent on maintaining their economic ties with the South. The unpopularity of the intolerant anti-foreign legislation of 1855 was indicated when the Know Nothings were turned out of office in city elections in Norwich and New Haven. The party now expressed itself in favor of states' rights, and opposed the extension of slavery in the territories, taking the stand that "slavery is sectional, but freedom is national." The party continued to express its opposition to Catholicism, but abandoned its anti-foreign position and called for new laws concerning immigration and naturalization.³⁸ In his analysis of the party, Noonan contended that it had always been essentially anti-Catholic rather than anti-foreign, it being the Catholicism of the foreigners to which the party objected.³⁹ On this premise it would be in-



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correct to conclude that the party had abandoned its basic and original principles.

As the returns from the Fall elections came in, it was clear that the trend against the Know Nothings had not been checked. Only 32 towns were reported by the *Times* as having returned Know Nothing candidates to office, while 41 had placed Democrats in charge of local affairs. Another 29 towns chose town officials of varying political sympathies. It was asserted in the papers that "the party would fuse with anyone to snatch votes."⁴⁰ This evident disillusionment on the part of some with the Know Nothings and the bitter opposition of others to the national administration provided a vacuum giving room for the emergence of a new party.

The establishment of the Republican Party in Connecticut had been delayed by the success of the Know Nothing Party. Almost two years elapsed between the founding of the national party in 1854 and the public meeting in Hartford in February, 1856 called "to take into consideration the present exigencies in political affairs, and preliminary to the formation of a Republican Party in the State of Connecticut, to coöperate with the Republican movement in other states."⁴¹ The Republican Party was born out of the opposition to the extension of slavery in the territories which was possible under the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. The Party did not coalesce as a political unit until the Free Soilers, Whigs, and Know Nothings became shipwrecked upon the shoals of their own political expediency and the Democratic Party disrupted by the slavery issue.⁴² Even then the dissolution of the power of these parties was slow, and Republican success was not immediate.

From its very beginning, the Republicans became the party around which anti-slavery and anti-administration forces could rally. As the principles of the new party were charted by members who represented, according to the Springfield *Republican*, "the cream of the old Jackson Democratic party and of the Whig Party,"⁴³ anti-foreignism and anti-Catholicism were eschewed. The administration was charged with having "fallen under the influence and control of the Nullification Party," of having "set up a sectional test of fidelity to the government," and, contrary to the wishes of the people, had abrogated the Missouri Compromise by passing the Kansas-Nebraska Bill.⁴⁴ The party which

was to support coercive force to render the union inviolable, in its formative period, according to Gideon Welles, stood for a strict construction and adherence to the constitution, defended the rights of states, and opposed the unauthorized assumption of powers by the Federal government along with support for the rights of man and opposition to the extension of slavery.⁴⁵

The time had not yet come, however, when the Connecticut electorate would give unqualified support to anti-slavery principles. The 6,670 votes cast for Gideon Welles, the Republican, constituted 10 per cent of the total vote cast in the state election of 1856. Although he did not receive a popular majority, Ingham, the Democratic candidate, polled almost 7,000 more votes than his nearest rival, Governor Minor, the Know Nothing candidate. A coalition of the Know Nothings and Republicans awarded again the office of Governor to Minor. The Republicans failed in their most cherished objective: the selection, as a replacement for Isaac Toucey, of a Senator who would be less favorable to the administration. The Republicans were not able to force the selection of a compromise candidate and were forced to accept James Dixon, who was not in sympathy with their objectives. In spurning the temptation to fuse with the Know Nothings before the election by endorsing the Know Nothing candidate and in selecting their own candidate instead, they had established the identity of the party.⁴⁶

Affairs in Kansas kept the slavery issue alive. The Kansas-Nebraska Bill had hardly been signed when the energetic Eli Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts, combined principle and profit as he began the New England Emigrant Aid Society to encourage settlement of the Kansas territory. Kansas meant different things to different people. To many New England farmers, it represented an opportunity to acquire land at comparatively small cost. For many, who regarded slavery as a great moral wrong, it was a chance to oppose the extension of slavery. The organizers of the Emigrant Aid Society were intent on making a profit as well as interested in checking the growth of slavery.⁴⁷ Even so, less than 1,500 emigrants were dispatched to Kansas in the first year of the Society's existence. Its importance, particularly to Connecticut, should not be judged solely by the numbers it sent to Kansas. Kansas became a meeting ground for opposing forces: some con-

testing for land, some for political advantages, some for opposing solutions to the slavery question. "Bleeding Kansas" became a symbol in the contests and the Emigrant Aid Society was the agency through which Connecticut residents demonstrated the viability of Puritan virtues.⁴⁸

The Emigrant Aid Society was accepted in part because of the prominence in it of Congregational ministers. Because of their previous determined opposition to Garrison, their willingness to support the society made it seem moderate. Since the society was not dominated by abolitionists, a larger group considered it a desirable agency through which they could express their moral opposition to slavery. Horace Bushnell was a director of the society and Henry Ward Beecher collected funds to purchase rifles for the prospective immigrant. Although Leonard Bacon was not a member of the society, he spoke on the Kansas issue, and, in October 1855, opened his home for a meeting at which a director of the society spoke. Meanwhile, the *Independent* continued its relentless crusade against slavery and extended its criticism to President Pierce's policy in Kansas.⁵⁰ Opposition to slavery and interest in making Kansas free was not confined to the ministers. Benjamin Silliman, the Yale chemist, was also a director of the society and was responsible for organizing and outfitting a group which left New Haven for Kansas.⁵¹ Yet, the degree to which the ministers were responsible for the society's effectiveness is suggested by the fact that the Democrats held "those damned ministers" responsible for Buchanan's defeat in Connecticut.⁵²

In 1856, party alignments were determined by relative positions on the issue of extension of slavery into the territories. The Know Nothings, or Americans, split on the question, and the Connecticut delegation withdrew and with other state delegations formed the North American wing of the party, which, after political jockeying, endorsed John Frémont, the Republican Presidential nominee. In an effort to unite the northern and southern wings of their party, the Democrats chose James Buchanan and endorsed the party's position on the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Bill.⁵³

The Democrats, who in their platform attacked nativism, sought to cause a defection of the Know Nothings from a support of the Republican ticket by reviving the religious issue. Frémont was alleged to be a Catholic. The story was apparently based upon the fact that Fré-

mont had been married by a Catholic priest. No doubt all were not enthusiastic about the Pathfinder, yet even for Congregational ministers there were issues more important than Catholicism. Some discounted the allegation of Frémont's Catholicism; others, such as the minister from Monroe, voted for him even though not fully satisfied that he was not Catholic and fearful of the consequences of a Catholic President. Slavery was a more important issue.⁵⁴

The national campaign was carried on amidst the heat of the slavery controversy. Charles Sumner had delivered his "masterly tirade" against Kansas on May 19 and 20, and emotions reached new heights when, two days later, Preston Brooks "expressed his contempt for both the man and his words by beating him over the head with a gutta-percha walking stick."⁵⁵ Meanwhile the Emigrant Aid Society was enlisting support by sending speakers into the eastern states and the Republicans countered Democratic efforts by bringing the Free Soilers, Andrew Reeder and Charles Robinson, to speak in Connecticut.⁵⁶ The election was a spirited one. True to the prophecy of the Republicans, Frémont polled a total of 42,715 votes to 34,995 for Buchanan. Fillmore, the presidential candidate nominated by the pro-slavery segment of the Know Nothings, received a mere 2,615 votes. The relative strength of the anti-slavery Know Nothings in Connecticut was concealed by their coalition with the Republicans.⁵⁷

The tenuous nature of the successful coalition was revealed as preparations were made for the forthcoming state election. The Know Nothings were faced with a dilemma derived from a fear that they could not retain power independently of the Republicans and a fear that continued cooperation would mean the submergence of their party's principles.⁵⁸ In solution, they attempted to secure a dominant position in the coalition, but met with sharp resistance from the Republicans. A compromise, by which the Know Nothings agreed to dissolve their state chapter and both parties agreed to break with all incompatible political antecedents, achieved coordination in the naming of a state ticket for the 1857 campaign which included two Republicans and three Know Nothings. Among the latter was Alexander Holley, the nominee for Governor. The struggle for power within the union, and even among the Know Nothing factions, came to the surface

when a Know Nothing Council met in February. This endorsed the union candidates, but adopted anew the nativistic principles contained in the Know Nothing platform of 1855. This tactic was intended either to drive the Republicans from support of the union ticket or to secure an appearance of their subservience to the Know Nothings, and in either case to maintain the power of this Know Nothing faction in the Union organization. The *Courant*, which had been an organ of Know Nothingism, condemned the Council meeting and the continuation of the American Party, but continued to support nativistic principles. The editor of the *Courant* was the brother-in-law of Holley, the gubernatorial candidate. Unlike the Know Nothing faction, he was not willing to sacrifice the union of the two parties and Holley's chances of election. The Hartford *Evening Press*, which had been established in 1856 as the organ of the Republican Party, also, came to support the union ticket after Joseph R. Hawley, who had been associated with the *Courant*, replaced one of the *Press* editors. The presses of the two groups were thus reconciled and consistent in support of the union candidates. Although the Republicans were distressed at the corrosion of the *Press* by Know Nothingism, the union campaign proceeded under the guise of harmony, however thin.⁵⁹

Events on the national level provided a common ground upon which all factions could unite against the Democrats. The Dred Scott case again focused the public's attention on the slavery issue. Buchanan's interest in the case apparently was motivated by a desire to settle the slavery question by legal means, but the assumption, later confirmed, that he was meddling in the politics of the court gave strength to fears that there was a conspiracy afoot to validate slavery in the whole of the United States. Politicians seized upon the decision for their own political advantage. The Union Party's State Committee portrayed the decision as an attempt to establish an aristocracy and as a mortal blow against free labor. Whatever the ethics of this attack, Holley, the Union candidate, defeated Ingham, the Democratic candidate, but only by 546 out of a total of 62,858 votes. Gideon Welles wrote some years later that the Dred Scott case was a decisive factor in the Union success in 1858. The Federal Relations Committee of the General Assembly held that the Court had decided nothing authoritatively beyond the fact that



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Scott could not sue in a Federal court. In a joint resolution of both houses, the Assembly charged the court with partisan purposes and requested the Connecticut Congressional delegation to oppose any legislation to admit another slave holding state to the Union.⁶⁰

The attention of the public was diverted from the perennial questions of nativism and slavery by the panic of 1857. The economic expansion stimulated by the growth of manufacturing and the extension of the railroads slowed perceptibly in the Summer of 1857 and came to a rocking halt in the Fall of that year. Unwarranted expansion of railroads, extensive speculation in real estate, chaos in the banking system, and a decline of foreign trade contributed to the unfavorable conditions. A fall in the stock market was followed with the failure of a number of prominent business concerns. When a shipment of gold from California did not arrive in the East as scheduled, the Federal government entered the money market, but was unable to reverse the financial difficulty. Eighteen banks in New York suspended operations on October 15, and other banks throughout the nation followed.⁶¹

Connecticut was not free of the circumstances which produced the general catastrophe. In order to provide the currency necessary for the expanding economy, legislation which limited the issue of bank currency to 100 per cent of capital stock had been repealed in 1855, and private banks had been authorized to issue currency to the amount of one and one half times their capital stock. Under this provision, banking facilities had expanded rapidly during the decade. In the Spring preceding the crash, for example, the Assembly had incorporated nine new banks. Among these were certain fraudulent ventures such as the Granite Bank of Voluntown. An indication of its duplicity was its issue of notes before its stock subscription was complete and, also, its failure to identify a place of business. When the panic struck, Connecticut banks suspended specie payment on October 14, and the bills in circulation were reduced within six months from ten to four million. Connecticut financial institutions weathered the storm comparatively well, however. Specie payment was resumed after only two months and only 16 banks in the state failed to pay their usual dividends.⁶²

The panic was shortlived, but it left its imprint upon the awareness of political leaders. As the Republicans emerged as an independent

political force in the elections of 1858 and 1859, they turned to one who was experienced in finance and who enjoyed the confidence of business leaders. William A. Buckingham was to begin, in 1858, a tenure of office which would extend through the American Civil War. The Americans and the Republicans continued to hold each other in mutual distrust. The Know Nothings had long since been bankrupt of political issues, while the Republicans were the apostles of issues which moved men emotionally, opposition to slavery and to the national administration. Those among the Know Nothings who objected to straight Republican principles made one last feeble effort in 1858 to run a state ticket. These few last mourners among the relatives had not admitted that as a political issue nativism was dead and that the Know Nothing Party was buried with it. In 1859, the Know Nothings were no more than an irritant in the harmonious workings of the Republican Party. It was becoming increasingly difficult for the Democrats in Connecticut to defend the national administration. The Kansas issue was kept alive by anti-LeCompton meetings held throughout the state. The defections within the Democratic national party made the position of the state ticket even more untenable. It was reported in both 1858 and 1859 that Stephen A. Douglas, who opposed the admission of Kansas under the LeCompton Constitution, was anxious for the defeat of the Democratic ticket headed by James T. Pratt. The schism between the Buchanan and Douglas factions was further widened in 1859 by rumors that the President was removing Douglas men from office. Nevertheless, administration men retained predominant influence within the Democratic party. The balance of strength between the two parties made Connecticut something of a political weathervane of national political winds. Buckingham's defeat of Pratt in two successive campaigns was indicative of the course of events.⁶³

The fateful year of 1860 was begun amidst the emotions engendered by John Brown's raid on the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry. The state could not remain unconcerned about the actions of this native son. Although it was difficult for Connecticut to endorse insurrection, Brown's bold stroke elicited sympathy from many. Leonard Bacon entered a plea in Brown's behalf during his trial on the grounds of an apparently deranged mind. Brown became a martyr to a cause, but

both political parties considered it necessary to condemn Brown's raid. The Democrats wished to maintain, if not to improve, relations with Southern Democrats. The Republicans, accused by the Democrats of complicity, considered it necessary to disavow sympathy with such tactics. The impact of John Brown's raid on the developing intensity of the anti-slavery attitude should not be underestimated, yet there were other immediate factors operating as determinants of reaction.⁶⁴

The Democrats attempted to capitalize on the desire of Connecticut merchants and manufacturers to continue their lucrative trade with the South, a trade which was considered necessary to the continued prosperity of the state. Connecticut manufacturers were invited to meet at Meriden on January 18, 1860, ostensibly to discuss the effect of the growing political turbulence on trade. The Republicans, learning that the Democrats were behind the meeting, packed the house. Those who supported the administration's position on the extension of slavery in the territories and those who would, perhaps, have compromised the political differences between the sections for their own economic well-being were outnumbered and withdrew from the convention. The Republicans identified them as pro-slavery men and as second-rate manufacturers.⁶⁵

The state campaign of 1860 is more memorable for campaign techniques than for new political issues. Both parties denounced Brownism. The Democrats attempted to play down the slavery issue, denounced the franking privilege, and supported cheap postage. The Republicans reaffirmed their stand on national issues, gave attention to the mounting demand for a protective tariff and for a homestead law. The Republicans renominated their entire state ticket. The Democrats dropped Pratt and returned to a former favorite, Thomas H. Seymour, whose candidacy stimulated the Republicans to energetic efforts. Both national parties poured money and speakers into the state. In March, Lincoln appeared in Hartford, New Haven, Meriden, Middletown, Waterbury, and Norwich. Campaign clubs were organized throughout the state. The most colorful of these were the "Wide Awakes," which began with a chapter in Hartford and grew to include 10,000 members throughout the state. They warred with their counterpart, the Democratic Seymour clubs, until election day. Buckingham

was elected by a mere 541 votes, which represented a decrease in the previous year's small margin. The substantial Republican majorities in both houses of the General Assembly were, perhaps, more indicative of the temper of the people.⁶⁶

As the national party was torn asunder on the slavery issue, Connecticut Democrats quarrelled among themselves for the control of the party and further reduced their fading chances of success in the presidential election of 1860. Administration Democrats, blinded perhaps by the Federal patronage which they had enjoyed, had lost touch with political reality. Not only were they stunned when the southern delegates walked out at Charleston, but also they were powerless at the Baltimore convention where Douglas forces controlled the Connecticut delegation determining three and one-half of the state's four votes. The old line Democrats, as administration men were styled, here paid the penalty for having rejected James T. Pratt the previous Spring, for he had gained control of the Douglas faction. Calls for union were ignored. Both factions were looking beyond that November to 1864. As the extent of the Democratic split was realized, the confidence of the Republicans mounted.⁶⁷

Republicans were convinced that they had chosen a winner in Lincoln, although pre-convention sentiment had been divided as to the choice of a nominee. Bates, with the support of the *Courant*, was the Connecticut favorite. On the first ballot he received seven of Connecticut's twelve votes. Lincoln increased from two on the first to only four on the third and last ballot. Other Connecticut votes were divided still among Bates, Salmon P. Chase, William H. Seward, and Cassius Clay. Yet, the *Courant*, which had not supported Lincoln, expressed the sincere spirit of the Republican Party when it observed, "The Convention of Chicago has but responded to the impulses of the popular heart. The people want one of themselves for President."⁶⁸

This note of serenity was interrupted when the State Central Committee, dominated by remnants of the Know Nothing Party, omitted the name Republican in issuing the call for the electoral convention. When the Know Nothings named the chairman of the convention, a party split seemed imminent. Then Nehemiah D. Sperry, the former "high priest of the Know Nothings," promised that in all future calls

the word Republican would be used. Although differences between factions of the party recurred throughout the Civil War period, harmony reigned during the remainder of the campaign.⁶⁹ With the Wide Awakes taking the lead, the campaign took on a festive note as the election day approached. The electorate gave Lincoln 43,792 votes against a combined vote of 33,454 for Douglas, Breckenridge, and Bell. The margin of victory cannot, however, be attributed to a surge of Republicanism. The total Republican vote was 666 less than it had been the previous Spring but the Democratic vote had fallen 11,900. Democrats, torn by the factious spirit within their own party, simply had chosen not to vote. The relative strength of the parties remained approximately the same.⁷⁰

The Republicans had advanced to a position of political leadership in the state. Although Buckingham's margin of victory had been small, the Republicans were in control of the executive offices, had a comfortable working majority in the Assembly, and had provided Lincoln with a 10,000 majority. Out of the political chaos of the decade which was drawing to a close there had risen a new party which was in harmony with the political realities of the time. Even after the election of Lincoln, the feeling prevailed that somehow the Union would be preserved. Despite repeated warnings, and even after South Carolina's secession ordinance, conversation was still of the preservation of the Union.⁷¹

NOTES—CHAPTER XXII

¹ Carroll John Noonan, *Nativism in Connecticut, 1829-1860* (Washington, 1938), pp. 134-35.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 138-39.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁴ *Hartford Times*, Feb. 28, 1849, quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 140-41.

^{4a} *Ibid.*, pp. 141-42.

⁵ J. Robert Lane, *A Political History of Connecticut during the Civil War* (Washington, 1941), pp. 7-10.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁸ Theodore Bacon, *Leonard Bacon: A Statesman in the Church* (New Haven, 1931), pp. 339-49.

^{8a} Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 13; Noonan, *Nativism*, p. 148.

^{8b} *Ibid.*, pp. 155-56.

⁹ Bacon, *Leonard Bacon*, p. 339; Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 11-13.

- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18; Noonan, *Nativism*, p. 150.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 152-53.
- ¹² Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 11-34.
- ¹³ Noonan, *Nativism*, p. 269.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 268-73.
- ¹⁵ *Hartford Times*, Feb. 3, Aug. 10, 1847, quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 169-70; also, see pp. 270-71.
- ^{15a} *Hartford Courant*, Mar. 29, 1852, cited in *ibid.*, p. 153; also see pp. 157-59.
- ¹⁶ *Hartford Courant*, Nov. 5, 1852, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 162.
- ¹⁷ Samuel C. Busey, *Immigration, Its Evils and Consequences* (New York, 1856), p. 147, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 161.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 142-46; Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 4.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35; Bacon, *Leonard Bacon*, p. 386.
- ²² Noonan, *Nativism*, p. 179.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 178; Bacon, *Leonard Bacon*, p. 389.
- ²⁴ James A. Woodburn, *Political Parties and Party Problems in the United States* (New York, 1924), p. 56.
- ²⁵ Quoted in Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 37.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 35-39.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- ²⁸ Noonan, *Nativism*, pp. 183-84.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 164 ff.; Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 45 ff.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 45; Noonan, *Nativism*, p. 195.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 195.
- ³² *Ibid.*, pp. 195-200.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 201-209; Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 43-50.
- ³⁴ *Hartford Times*, May 3, 1855, quoted in Noonan, *Nativism*, p. 213.
- ³⁵ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 50-52.
- ³⁶ Noonan, *Nativism*, pp. 196-97.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 226-28.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 224-32; Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 52-54.
- ³⁹ Noonan, *Nativism*, pp. 165-66.
- ⁴⁰ *Hartford Times*, Aug. 20, Oct. 4, 1855, quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 224, 232.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 235.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 234-35; Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 55.
- ⁴³ Cited in *Hartford Times*, Mar. 13, 1856, quoted in Noonan, *Nativism*, p. 239.
- ⁴⁴ *Hartford Evening Press*, Feb. 27, 1856, quoted in Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 57.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 56.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58; Noonan, *Nativism*, pp. 240-48; Richard West, Jr., *Gideon Welles, Lincoln's Navy Department* (Indianapolis, 1943), pp. 74-75.
- ⁴⁷ Bacon, *Leonard Bacon*, p. 416; Avery Craven, *The Coming of the Civil War* (New York, 1942), pp. 357-58, 363-64.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 361-64; Bacon, *Leonard Bacon*, pp. 417-18.
- ⁴⁹ Bacon, *Leonard Bacon*, 418.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁵¹ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 77-78.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 68-75.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- ⁵⁴ Craven, *Coming of the Civil War*, p. 367.

- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 361-62.
- ⁵⁷ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 77-78.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80; Noonan, *Nativism*, pp. 293-94.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 293-301; Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 79-88; West, *Gideon Welles*, p. 73.
- ⁶⁰ *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Connecticut*, May, 1857 (Hartford, 1857), pp. 338-41.
- ⁶¹ Roy Franklin Nichols, *The Disruption of American Democracy* (New York, 1948), pp. 132-34.
- ⁶² Ernest Morgan, ed., *Connecticut as a Colony and as a State*, Vol. III (Hartford, 1904), pp. 207-15.
- ⁶³ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 100-08; Noonan, *Nativism*, pp. 316-22; Samuel G. Buckingham, *The Life of William Buckingham* (Springfield, Mass., 1894), pp. 31-42.
- ⁶⁴ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 109-13; West, *Gideon Welles*, p. 77.
- ⁶⁵ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 110-14.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 114-22; Noonan, *Nativism*, pp. 323-34; West, *Gideon Welles*, pp. 80-83.
- ⁶⁷ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 122-38.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 122-30.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 132-35.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 139.
- ⁷¹ William John Niven, "The Time of the Whirlwind: A Study in the Political, Social, and Economic History of Connecticut from 1861 to 1875," (Doctoral thesis, Columbia University, microfilm, c. 1954), pp. 8-9.

Chapter XXIII

The Civil Conflict

EVEN AFTER SECESSION had become a reality, Connecticut supported compromise efforts, but would not countenance full appeasement of the South. The limits of conciliation imposed by the various segments of the population paralleled the several political sympathies. The Democrats recognized the need for keeping the border states within the Union, preached the doctrine of non-coercion of sovereign states, and insisted that the repeal of the personal liberty laws should be a part of any compromise attempt. When the course of events made this position untenable, this party suggested the peaceful dissolution of the Union. The conservative Republicans were solidly behind the early compromise efforts, but when the Crittenden Compromise failed to solve the issue of extending slavery in the territories, these conservatives moved toward the position of the radical Republicans and dropped conciliatory attitudes. At the beginning of the compromise efforts, the members of the Connecticut congressional delegation seemed divided in their sympathies, with Senator James Dixon the most extreme. He was apparently so intent on avoiding war that he was accused, perhaps with some truth, of favoring the Southern position.¹

Connecticut's Republican administration sent representatives to the Washington Peace Conference in February on the insistence of Gideon Welles that the Union viewpoint should certainly be represented. The delegates were instructed by Governor Buckingham to give no "sanction . . . to measures which shall bind the government to new guarantees for the protection of property in man."² The failure of the Peace Conference was not lost on the Connecticut Democrats, and, as the crisis mounted to open conflict, they espoused "an honorable

termination" of the troubles. In their call for a state convention they pledged that the party would "consider and consult upon the dangers that imperil the welfare of the country and the unity of States."³

The Connecticut electorate disregarded its fear of a long tenure for a Governor and selected, for a fourth term, William A. Buckingham, who was destined to be Governor for the duration of the war.⁴ Buckingham had entered public life as a compromise candidate of the Republican-Know Nothing coalition in 1858. Then a political novice, but of "eminent moral worth" and with a reputation of great integrity, he inspired confidence during the years following the economic distress of 1857. His determined stand against the extension of slavery in the territories established him as a standard bearer of Republican principles. The most important issue in 1861 was union and peace or disunion and war. The Democrats voiced a strong states' rights position while calling for the Crittenden Compromise and a repeal of the personal liberty laws. The Republicans denounced secession and accused the Democrats of giving aid and comfort to the enemy. A vote for the Republicans, it was said, was a vote for Lincoln. Buckingham secured 43,121 votes to 40,896 for James C. Loomis, the Democratic candidate. The Republican vote was less than in 1860, but the Democratic vote showed an even greater decrease. The latter was far from dead, however, and remained a strong political force throughout the war.⁵

During the first months of the war, partisan politics was made secondary to the national interests. However, to those who were not convinced of the necessity of the war, the defeat at Manassas was a signal for a drive for peace. The Democrats took the lead in this determined effort to stop the war. What was advertised as a grass roots movement had been carefully planned in the closing days of the last session of the General Assembly. The leader was William W. Eaton, "a successful lawyer, able debater, and prominent politician."⁶ In the first days of August, peace meetings were held throughout the state. These meetings featured white peace flags and staged passionate speeches. It was hoped that they would stem enthusiasm and the peace-makers even encouraged desertion. Since there was a definite pro-war sentiment in the cities, an attempt was made to appeal to the farmers, who were facing depressed prices at the time. It was asserted that the movement sprang

from “the hearts of the honest farmers,”⁷ and it is true that the movement was supported by the Bridgeport *Farmer*. The offices of “that most infamous and mendacious sheet” were mobbed, peace flags torn down, and peace meetings disrupted or prevented by violence as well



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

CLINTON—TOWN HALLS

as countered by pro-war meetings. The Governor called upon the people to abstain from any act which would encourage the conspiracy, and ordered the police to arrest “those who are guilty of sedition, and of those who are embraced in combinations to obstruct the executions of the laws.”⁸ Thereafter, the actions and expressions of the proponents of peace conformed to the limits of the legal circumscription. The intense feelings occasioned by the peace movement in the Fall of 1861 were short-lived and were superseded by a general desire to give unlimited support to the Federal Government.⁹

The Union Party, which emerged in 1862, was intended to provide an affiliation for War Democrats who did not wish to be incorporated in the Republican Party and it was hoped that a majority of Republicans would also join. The Republicans did not wish to give up their independent organization, but did nominate the same slate of candidates as the Union party. This slate was composed of the incumbent officers except for two changes. The Democrats emphasized the preservation of the Union as their first objective. They went through the form of framing a platform which contained the usual criticisms of the Republicans. There was such a general awareness of the political temper of the times, however, that neither William Eaton, the recognized head of the party, nor any of its candidates troubled to address the convention. Buckingham carried every county in the state and secured the largest majority ever over Loomis, again the Democratic nominee. Events of the Fall of 1862, however, removed any self-imposed restraints on criticism of the Government and resulted in a period of partisan bitterness.¹⁰

The period which followed was "the darkest period of the war" for Connecticut.¹¹ Buckingham's successive victories were gained amidst increasing acrimony. To the disappointment of the military defeats of 1862 was added the bitterness resulting from Buckingham's attempt to strengthen the militia through the draft and Lincoln's announcement of his intention to emancipate the slaves. Also, the Democrats had become critical of the Republicans' policy of financing the war through borrowing to avoid levying taxes. Although the town elections in the Fall of 1862 did not record a decisive victory for the Democrats, the voting did suggest a trend which prompted Republicans to extreme measures.¹² As Commander-in-Chief of the state forces, the Governor was in a position to exert a powerful influence on ambitious officers who could be counted upon to inform their men of the correct positions on the issues. There was uncertainty as to whether enfranchisement of the volunteers necessitated a constitutional amendment. Without concern for constitutional propriety, the volunteers were enfranchised. The 900 who returned, it was said, to cast their vote for Buckingham do not account for the 2,700 majority he received, but did accomplish further embitterment of the Democrats.¹³ The Demo-

crats forced the judiciary to review the law enfranchising the volunteers. Despite forewarning that judges who voted against the law would be purged, the law was declared unconstitutional. Therefore, by a straight party vote, a constitutional amendment was passed in a special session of the Assembly in January, 1864.

With an eye on the post-war period, each party was seeking to broaden the franchise, but was concerned with the enfranchisement of a different segment of the population. As a result of the emancipation of the slaves and the military victories of 1863, there was a tendency to interpret the war in terms of humanitarian ideals. These could be expressed and political advantage gained, perhaps, by the Republicans if they secured voting privileges for the negro. The total negro male population in the state was small, but if it proved to be properly distributed might be decisive in a closely contested election. The Republicans were aware that the only course open to them was constitutional amendment. When the proposed amendment came up for vote in June 1864, the Democrats sought to strike out the word "white" from Article 6, section 2, of the proposal. This would have had the effect of repealing the literacy test which had been passed in 1855 and would have enfranchised three or four times more immigrants than there were negroes in the state and would have benefited the Democrats. The Democratic tactic was unsuccessful and only the negroes would be enfranchised by the amendment if it were passed again in the next assembly and finally ratified by the people.¹⁵

Politically, the war had been translated into negro rights, but these had been at least of secondary importance in 1861 when the states had responded rather to a call to preserve union.

The careless optimism of the national administration in the days after the fall of Sumter was compensated for by the determined leadership of state governors, such as William Buckingham, and the enthusiastic response of the populace.¹⁶ On Saturday, April 13, crowds gathered in anticipation of the report of the firing on Fort Sumter. On Sunday, the pulpits echoed with calls to arms, and within a week war meetings were held in towns throughout the state. Banks immediately extended financial aid, and ladies provided the auxiliary services necessary to the mobilization effort. As volunteers far exceeded the need, Bucking-

ham sought unsuccessfully to make an agreement with the War Department to accept extra regiments.¹⁷ Connecticut regiments rendezvoused at New Haven, where they were instructed in the rudiments of military duty. The populace was sympathetic to the soldiers' com-



(Courtesy New Britain Chamber of Commerce)

NEW BRITAIN—CENTER OF CITY

plaints about food and contributed generously to the collection of supplies.¹⁸

Despite the enthusiasm of the populace, the state was not yet willing to make a total effort. Buckingham, in anticipation of the course of events, had sought in January, 1861, to improve the militia, which was far from adequate when the war began. The legislature was not convinced of the necessity of building up a pool of manpower. Not until July, 1861, was a new militia bill passed which permitted the Governor to draft citizens into the militia. This was encumbered with

so many qualifications that it was rendered useless. All who could pay one dollar tax were exempt, for example, and it was established that members of the active militia were liable for Federal duty only on the direct requisition of the President and Governor. The Assembly did authorize enlistments up to 10,000 and a bond issue of \$2,000,000 to support these enlistments.¹⁹

Not only did a fighting force have to be prepared, but provisions had to be made for the social and economic dislocations to be expected because of the war. The legislators were aware of the veterans of the Mexican War who were treated with "callous indifference" as they walked the streets in hunger. A bounty of ten dollars a month was voted for the three month volunteers, but, when an effort was made to extend it to the three year volunteers, the bounty was changed to thirty dollars a year. In addition, an allowance of six dollars was granted to each wife or adult dependent and two dollars for each child under ten years of age, but with a maximum of ten dollars permitted for each family.²⁰

Connecticut troops were quick to face the test of battle. By the last of May, three regiments had arrived in Washington. They remained in nearby Falls Church until July 16, when they were moved into position before the Confederates at Bull Run. The troops were thrown into battle in mid-morning on July 21 as Federal troops crossed a stream to attack. The battle was joined at about eleven o'clock and Federal troops held the initiative until one in the afternoon, when Confederate reenforcements forced their retreat. In the general rout which followed, Connecticut forces provided effective cover as they beat an orderly retreat. On the day after the battle the troops returned to Washington, and then home, where they were mustered out of the service. The lessons of Bull Run were not lost on the nation or on Connecticut. The period of optimism had passed: it was no longer expected that ninety day volunteers would suffice.²¹

In response to the exigencies accompanying military defeat, tolerance of opposition to the war effort was limited and the state extended additional powers to the Governor. He was authorized to receive an unlimited number of volunteers and the \$2,000,000 appropriated for the first year of the war was doubled. By Fall, Connecticut had nine

regiments in the field. To supplement the available supplies, Connecticut joined the search for arms in Europe. Those secured were of poor quality, but their procurement prevented their falling into the hands of the Confederacy.²² The extent to which these arms helped to meet the immediate need was reduced by the accompanying faulty distribution, waste, and wrong-doing.

Avarice and graft raised their heads while the populace was attempting to recover from the bitter disappointment of Manassas. John M. Hathaway, Connecticut's Quartermaster General, was forced out of office. The accusations went beyond the questionable conduct of members of his Department to involve the General himself. Hathaway was accused of accepting a check from the Sharp's Rifle Company and of unjustifiably charging the state for rations. Also, although it was not discovered until after the war, the State Treasurer, G. W. Coite, utilized his office for personal gain and admitted having bilked the government of \$12,000. Neither of the officials was prosecuted, but the difficulties in the Quartermaster Department lessened confidence in the administration at a time when it appeared that New England might become a theater of conflict.²³

The knowledge that England was preparing to send troops to Canada spurred the Governor to new, but unsuccessful, efforts. Information of this British intent served to sober the Governor who had joined in the general rejoicing over the news that Captain Charles Wilkes had intercepted the English mail packet, *Trent*, removed the Confederate Ministers to Britain and France, James Mason and John Slidell, and imprisoned them in Fort Monroe. The Governor, to improve the state's defenses, acted under a law of 1851 and ordered a draft to fill the rolls of the state militia. Although the militia was solely for defensive purposes, it was generally believed that its members were subject to Federal orders. Various methods were used to evade the draft and towns refused to fill their quotas. After two weeks, Buckingham rescinded the order amidst the criticism of Republicans and Democrats alike.²⁴

As the Union forces engaged the Confederates on the periphery of their defense in the early months of 1862, Connecticut troops took up positions along the extended Federal line. The eighth, tenth, and

eleventh regiments participated in the combined naval and military operations in February and March of 1862 along the coast of the Carolinas, and, as a result of the capture of Roanoke Island and New Berne, tightened the blockade on Southern ports. A near mastery of the South Atlantic coast line was achieved by the Union when its forces, including



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

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the sixth and seventh regiments of Connecticut, in April, 1862, seized Fort Pulaski, which commanded the city of Savannah. The encirclement was almost complete when, in the latter part of the same month, New Orleans fell to the Federal forces. Among those at New Orleans were the ninth, twelfth, and thirteenth Connecticut regiments. As these outposts of the Confederate line fell, Connecticut troops joined in the attack on the Confederate capital.²⁵

The successes of the Federal troops in the Spring and early Summer had been transformed into bitter disappointment by the end of 1862.²⁶ The Connecticut First Heavy Artillery joined McClellan near Yorktown, Virginia, on April 12, in preparation for the peninsular

campaign. The battery of heavy guns was immediately brought into service in the siege before the capitulation of the Confederate works. Valuable time had been lost. Stonewall Jackson had aroused fears for the safety of Washington during April and May by his hit and run tactic through the Shenandoah Valley. The Connecticut Fifth, which had crossed the Potomac, March 1, advanced into Virginia as a part of Nathaniel Bank's command and joined his advance guard in battle against Jackson at Winchester, Virginia, on May 25th. The Federal troops fell back, but after being reenforced sought to contain Jackson in the Valley. He escaped, however, and joined Lee's forces in the defense of Richmond. The Seven Days' Battle, from June 25 to July 31, 1862, during which the Connecticut Fifth provided artillery cover, particularly at Chickahominy and Malvern Hill, was judged a Northern victory, yet the army's failure to take Richmond resulted in a bitter disappointment for the populace.²⁷ Disappointment deepened when the Second Battle of Manassas and Antietam were no better than draws.²⁸ "The Nadir of Northern depression seemed to have been reached," when Burnside, who had only shortly before succeeded to the command of the Union forces, "committed one of the colossal blunders of the war in bringing on the disastrous defeat at Fredericksburg."²⁹ Early on the morning of December 11, the hazardous task of building a pontoon bridge across the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg was begun with 100 men of the Connecticut Eighth taking their turn at construction under the sharp and accurate Confederate fire. The crossing had been completed by the next day, and, on the morning of the thirteenth, Federal troops, including the Connecticut Fourteenth and Twenty-Seventh Volunteers, poured out of the city, across the plains, and into the death trap before Marye's Heights, into which Burnside had directed them. "The magnitude of the blunder seemed to be equalled only by the magnitude of the losses."³⁰

The military reverses of the Summer of 1862 dampened the war spirit. Quotas were filled only under the threat of a draft and the offer of bounties. Connecticut had met the quota of the first 300,000 called in the Spring of 1862, but volunteers to meet the second call were lagging. To encourage volunteering, the legislature approved a bounty of 50 dollars. Later, towns, eager to avoid a draft, increased the bounty

to \$150. Buckingham had established August 15 as the deadline for meeting the quota by volunteers.³¹ When the quota had not been met on this date, the deadline was advanced first to September 1 and then to September 10. The state was enjoying the profits from its wartime industry. The home front was filled with gaiety and entertainment. "Unprecedented numbers played at Saratoga," Lane points out, and "when the draft was announced in September, many of the potential conscripts were away in the Mountains of New England."³² Prosperity turned men's minds from the responsibilities of the time. Some, whose entry into the forces was anticipated, went to Canada, others secured medical exemptions. Hartford and New Haven tried coercion by publishing the names of draft dodgers. Public men appealed to pride and patriotism. At least one industrialist gave employees who would enlist one-third pay during their absence and the assurance of a job on their return. Although violence was expected, 1,212 men were conscripted without any disturbance.³³

Conscription, too, failed. "As practiced and enforced, evaded and obstructed," conscription, according to Randall, "was one of the crying scandals of the war."³⁴ In Connecticut, as throughout the nation, the supplying of substitutes became a profitable business. In New York, it was charged, a substitute for a Connecticut draftee could be secured for \$300. The prices fluctuated, however, so that a Wesleyan student first sold himself and then hired a substitute to make a \$100 profit. Bounty jumpers were abundant since the opportunity to sell one's services had tempted some to sell themselves more than once. As a result of bounty jumping, medical exemptions, and desertions, only 135 of the 1,212 draftees ever reached camp, and 81 of those who reported subsequently deserted. Such wholesale defiance could have prevailed only if a general concurrence existed in the state. The citizens' rebellious opposition to the draft is indicated by Wethersfield, where it was resolved in town meeting that the town would not have a draft and that the town would pay any fine imposed by the State for the Selectman's failure to impose a draft.³⁵

The emancipation of the slaves in January 1863 gave new purpose to the war. The Republicans had been divided on the issue of abolition since the beginning of the conflict. The radicals had consistently advo-

cated emancipation, but the conservatives had initially refused to support this. As the war progressed, conservative thought altered, and by March 1862 had come to support Lincoln's plan for compensated emancipation. Yet, in September 1862, when Lincoln announced his



(Courtesy Fairfield Historical Society)

FAIRFIELD—TOWN HALL

intention to free the slaves, the *Courant* reported that the conservatives were not ready for radical measures. The Democrats held that the proposal was unconstitutional. The different views on emancipation made it extremely difficult for the parties to cooperate in the prosecution of the war. Nevertheless, emancipation provided the war with a moral cause, the freeing of the negro, which was more compelling than partisanship or legalism.³⁶

The dreariness of encampment in the Winter of 1862-63 was in-

interrupted by picketing duties, marauding parties, and occasional thrusts at the enemy's position. The main body of Connecticut troops remained with the Army of the Potomac.³⁷ The Sixth and Seventh Regiments maintained their position off the Georgia coast and five regiments of Connecticut's Nine Months' Volunteers strengthened the established forces in the Gulf and assisted in patrolling the waters, occupying New Orleans, and raiding Confederate strongholds along the Mississippi.³⁸

The course of the decisive campaigns of 1863 was indicated early in the year. Hooker, who had replaced Burnside, continued to pose a threat to the Confederates in the Valley and, as a result of the transfer of the Ninth Corps³⁹ to Newport News and then to Suffolk, kept pressure on the Confederates before Richmond and threatened to strengthen Federal forces in Kentucky.⁴⁰ Lee, understanding the difficulty of a simultaneous defense against the Federals on all fronts, planned the invasion of Maryland.⁴¹ Meanwhile, in the Susquehanna Valley, Hooker launched his anticipated attack on Lee on April 29. Five Connecticut regiments were with him.⁴² Hooker's advantage of numbers was dissipated by his permitting Stonewall Jackson to outflank his troops, which forced Hooker to retreat and resulted in heavy losses. Among the Connecticut troops, there were 200 casualties and 500 captured.⁴³

Lee moved northward. Hooker moved in the same direction over a more easterly route, keeping his forces between Lee and the nation's capital. The Battle of Gettysburg was precipitated on July 1, when George G. Meade, who had replaced Hooker, ordered the First and Eleventh Corps, which included the Connecticut Seventeenth, to the north of the city. Here the Connecticut troops made first contact with the Rebels. In the face of Confederate fire, the troops were withdrawn. Lee failed to follow up his advantage, and Meade moved his forces into position during the night, placing the troops on the heights south of the city. The Connecticut troops were in strategic positions: the Fifth and Twentieth were on the extreme right, beyond Culp's Hill, the Seventeenth in the right center defending Cemetery Hill, and the Fourteenth and Twenty-Seventh to the left on the same hill. All were engaged on the second, and held their positions intact through the day,

against the repeated efforts the next day to storm Cemetery Hill, and until the final attack was repelled. The five Connecticut regiments had borne a creditable part in the defeat of Lee's forces, which meant victory in the East.⁴⁴

In the West, Grant had wearied of unsuccessful efforts to get a force in front of Vicksburg. He crossed the Mississippi above the city, marched on the Louisiana side to a point far below Vicksburg, and waited for the Mississippi fleet to run the batteries. Gunboats and transports had been developed especially for river service, at Lincoln's urging, by Connecticut's Rear Admiral Andrew Hull Foote, the hero of Island Number Ten and Forts Henry and Donelson. By the end of April, these were ready to transport Grant's forces back to the Mississippi side of the river. By the middle of May, the city was invested and its surrender was forced on July 4, 1863.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, Connecticut regiments had been employed since early Spring in supporting Farragut in his attempt to push his way up the Mississippi. Connecticut troops were among those which moved, near the end of May, down the Mississippi from the mouth of the Red River toward Fort Hudson. With its fall, July 9, 1863, it was obvious that the Battle of the Mississippi had been won by the North.⁴⁶

Connecticut was slow to realize the significance of the victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg. After the succession of defeats in 1862 and the reversal at Chancellorsville earlier in the campaign, Connecticut was cautious in interpreting the later victories. Then, too, Connecticut's regiments, although they made an important contribution at Gettysburg, were not numerous. There were only 45 casualties among the Connecticut troops at Gettysburg and hardly any at Vicksburg. The battles had a minimal direct impact on the state, then. Also, in July 1863 there prevailed among the Connecticut populace a spirit of unrest engendered by the introduction of the Federal conscription law which had been enacted in March 1863.⁴⁷

As selection was begun under the conscription law there was apparent tranquility, but it was feared that the existent current of unrest might erupt into open hostility. That there were names of students and professors from Yale and of socially prominent families in Hartford among the first selectees may have served to allay the bitterness of many

who had come to regard the war as a poor man's contest. In any event, selection proceeded without incident until news was received of draft riots in New York. The press initially reacted along political lines until it was realized that such riots posed a threat to property. Then the demonstrations were consistently denounced as acts of mobs and un-



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

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becoming to a "land of steady habits." As angry men walked the streets of New Haven and stories spread of undercover activity in Hartford, factory owners sought military protection for their establishments. State troops moved quickly to points of rumored disturbance and the threats of open resistance never materialized.⁴⁸

Opposition to conscription, however, was effective largely because of defects in the Federal law. That draftees were allowed to supply substitutes enabled many to avoid military service and resulted in a thriving business in substitutes. They made their own bargains or offered their services through brokers who received a percentage of the

contract price which fluctuated in accordance with supply and demand. As the brokers gained experience, they became more audacious: men were encouraged to enlist and desert; old men were made to look of military age with the aid of false teeth and dyed hair; and, when substitutes came to be in very short supply, inmates of jails and reformatories were used.⁴⁹ The commutation phase of the Federal law was equally troublesome. Conservatives and radicals alike were frankly dismayed by the provision which would permit a conscript to fulfill his obligation by the payment of \$300. This seemed an obvious discrimination in favor of the wealthy. The *Norwich Aurora* announced that "the poor will never allow the rich man's money to be the equivalent for their blood."⁵⁰ Generally, the riots were explained by the commutation provision. Three hundred dollars seemed prohibitive for most of the state's residents. Nevertheless, the Governor reported in May, 1864, that 1,471 residents or approximately three percent of the total in the service credited to Connecticut had taken advantage of the law.⁵¹ Such procedures manifestly undermined the draft, which, in addition to being antithetical to the Connecticut tradition of volunteer services, threatened the supply of manpower necessary to man the machines.

In its public and private policy toward conscription, Connecticut mixed a sense of fair play with an eminent practicality. It was obvious that most of the conscripts would be immigrant laborers unable to hire a substitute or to pay a commutation fee. There was also a danger that the families of drafted men might become a public charge and that such expense would exceed the commutation cost. Accordingly, many towns, such as East Hartford, voted sums of money to purchase commutations for those who would otherwise be forced into service. Such acts were recognized to be extra-legal, but there was an expectation that such actions would be legalized by the Assembly. This confidence was confirmed, and such actions were applauded by those engaged in the battle of furnishing supplies for profit. The demand for labor in the state provided a degree of security against conscription and a freedom from the onus of draft dodging.⁵²

As a means of filling the ranks of the army, the draft failed. The first district supplied 1,078 of its quota of 2,162, the second 560 of its

quota of 1,939, and the third only 400 of its quota of 1,800. The state had provided only about one-third of its quota of 7,600 by the middle of October. As the Federal government requested additional quotas to be filled by January, 1864, the state again sought to attract additional volunteers through bounties.⁵³

An effort was made to standardize the bounty system. The state law had permitted each town to determine the amount of the bounties offered. Spirited bidding had resulted from efforts to attract substitutes from outside the town. In response to the Governor's request, the Assembly, in special session in November, 1863, prohibited towns from giving bounties and fixed the state bounty at three hundred dollars. Volunteers were credited to the towns from which they were enrolled or to those where they had their residence. In practice, the bounty was extended to those already in the service who reenlisted. The Assemblymen were in a practical mood. Any person who procured volunteers was to receive ten dollars a man. A motion to extend the bounties to conscripts failed, but another bill authorizing the enrollment of negro troops was approved.⁵⁴

In the Spring of 1863, Governor Buckingham had resisted suggestions that negroes be recruited, but by the Winter of 1864 the demand for troops and the apparently inexhaustible supply of negroes combined to overcome the Governor's caution. Agents were sent to the South, with cash in hand, to recruit the negroes. The agents too frequently, it is feared, defrauded the negroes of their bounty. Yet, the state recruited about eleven hundred negroes by these means. These were organized into the Twenty-ninth and Thirtieth regiments and by the Spring of 1864, the Twenty-ninth was in the field.⁵⁵

By these various means the state met its quota, although Niven is of the opinion that few citizens of the state volunteered for service after 1863. However, many of those who had volunteered in the first years of the war reenlisted. Those taken into service after 1863 were, in general, of poorer quality. The many ways of avoiding the draft resulted in a situation where few other than the mercantiles went into the field.⁵⁶ The regiments were also sapped by desertion. At the war's end, it was the relative rather than the absolute strength which allowed the margin for victory.

The military campaigns of 1864 centered around three major efforts. Sherman launched his attack on the lower South; Sheridan was occupied with devastating the Shenandoah Valley; and Grant, in company with Meade, opened his attack against Lee above Richmond on



(Photo by James Miller)

TORRINGTON—MAIN STREET, NORTH FROM CENTER OF BUSINESS DISTRICT

May 3, 1864. Forty days of fighting in successive engagements in the Wilderness Campaign and at Spotsylvania and Cold Harbor had not broken Lee's line, when, on June 15, Grant audaciously transferred his whole army south of the James River, took up his position to the east of Petersburg, and prepared to attack Richmond.⁵⁷ There Grant joined the forces of Ben Butler, which included the Sixth, Seventh, and Tenth Connecticut Regiments and the First Connecticut Cavalry. Ben

Butler, in a drive from Fort Monroe to Bermuda Hundred and on to Drewry Bluff, had threatened Richmond and had prevented Beauregard from joining Lee north of the James. Lee crossed the river and drew up his troops before Grant and dug in for the defense of Petersburg and Richmond.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, Sheridan had worried Lee's rear with a drive toward Richmond, and, in the Shenandoah, a Federal advance had to be met and was checked by Jubal A. Early, who had been detached by Lee from the main Confederate army.⁵⁹ Lee, in an effort to relieve his forces at Petersburg, sent Early towards Washington. Early's advance was sufficiently slowed by a hastily improvised Union army commanded by Lew Wallace to permit the Sixth Corps, including the Connecticut Eighteenth, to be detached by Grant and to reach the scene to send Early in retreat after he was within sight of the Capital. Grant immediately dispatched Sheridan in pursuit. With this new commander of the forces of the Shenandoah were the Connecticut Second Artillery, the First Cavalry, and the Ninth, Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Eighteenth regiments. In the face of the sharp attack, Early retired. Because of the onset of Winter, however, the issue of the Valley was not then decided, but Federal forces were in a command position and were growing stronger.⁶⁰

As Sheridan contested for control of the Valley and Grant pressured Richmond, Sherman was preparing his March to the Sea. The Fifth and Twentieth Connecticut regiments had transferred to Tennessee in September, 1863, and, in the Summer of 1864, participated in the drive on Atlanta. The drive to the sea was begun in November and the war entered its final stages.⁶¹

When operations were resumed in the Spring of 1865, Federal forces were bearing down upon the Confederate Capital at Richmond. Sherman's troops, including the Connecticut Fifth and Twentieth, left Savannah in the middle of January and headed toward the north while the Sixth and Seventh were among those who moved toward Wilmington. The first Connecticut Cavalry was with Sheridan's troops when, in the first days of march, they moved to join Grant's army by the way of the Valley, Lynchburg, Charlottesville, New Market, and Columbia, to the North of Richmond. The Second Artillery joined the First before Petersburg, while the remainder of the troops, with the ex-

ception of the Sixteenth, were along the line of the James and in the vicinity of Richmond.⁶² Union troops were relentless in their pressure. Richmond was fired on April 2 and pursuit of Lee's forces was begun the next day. The First Connecticut Cavalry was with Sheridan and the Second Artillery, and the Tenth, Fourteenth, and Thirtieth Infantry were with Meade. Lee was overtaken within a week, and, on April 9, at Appomattox, he succumbed to Grant's demand for an unconditional surrender.⁶³

Victory had been achieved with something less than a total effort.

When the contest was concluded, certain of the Connecticut troops were retained in the Army of Occupation, while others returned home to joyous welcomes. The bulk of the Connecticut forces were mustered out by the last of September 1865, but the remnants of the Thirteenth were detained in the service for more than a year after the war ended. The Eighth and Eleventh performed police duty in the vicinity of Lynchburg before arriving in Hartford in December, 1865. The Twenty-ninth and Thirtieth, composed of colored troops, returned to Connecticut in the Fall of 1865, after assisting in crushing the last vestige of the Confederacy in Texas where they had been dispatched after Appomattox.

Although there had been a general hesitancy on the part of the citizenry to join the forces in the field, the populace had been unstinting in its efforts to make military service more bearable. In the enthusiasm which prevailed in the first months of the war, ladies throughout the state knitted socks, rolled bandages, cut uniforms, and in every possible way indicated their solicitude for the departing heroes. When the first troops rendezvousing at New Haven nearly mutinied in protest against the plentiful, but poorly prepared food, the press supported their protest declaring that "it would be quite soon enough to starve the boys" after they were in battle. Delicacies of every sort were supplied by the citizens to the "suffering" volunteers, and the city council voted \$10,000 to supply some of the necessities of war.⁶⁵ Citizens responded similarly to the needs of the men in the field throughout the war. As experience was gained, the assistance offered became more purposeful.⁶⁶

As the war progressed, there was a tendency for citizens' efforts

to be carried on through organizations. Soldiers Aid societies were established throughout the state. The most dramatic program, perhaps, was that of Bridgeport's society, which made a successful effort to send a shipload of fresh vegetables to all of the Connecticut troops along the Atlantic coast.⁶⁷ Relief associations were placed under a general direction centered in Washington in the person of Gideon Welles. True to the state's tradition of independence, there was a tendency for the state to prefer its own relief associations to the Sanitary Commission which was devoted to the relief of all Union forces. However, the Hartford Association gave the major portion of its gifts to the Sanitary Commission and the state made supplementary appropriations for the expansion of hospital services at New Haven and for the transportation of the troops home.⁶⁸ Also, the Chaplains' Aid Society sought to assist the spiritual life of the soldiers by forwarding such materials as books, magazines, and chapel tents.⁶⁹ The war effort required the enthusiastic and patriotic assistance of the citizens, the determined and heroic efforts of the combat troops, and the energetic expansion and productivity of the economy. It was in this last aspect of the effort, perhaps, that Connecticut made her most significant contribution to the war.

A rush for contracts accompanied the opening of the war. Horatio Ames, for example, bore down upon Washington with all of his three hundred pounds and furious tenacity to convince the Ordnance Department of the value of the wrought iron cannon he was producing. When the Department failed to give him an order, Ames was convinced he had "devils to fight." "To make mockery of war is criminal," he charged, "to sacrifice a Nations [*sic*] Life for Dollars is Treason." His invective did not secure contracts. When conventionally armed ironclads failed to level Charleston, attention was directed to the possibility of bombardment with guns of great range and power.⁷¹ Ames marshalled support from representatives in Washington, including all of Connecticut's representatives, Senators Dixon and Foster, Congressman Hubbard, and Congressman-elect, Augustus Brandegee. The services of Horatio Ames' shrewd and calculating brother, Oakes, a Congressman from Massachusetts, and those of the Princeton-bred "Pet" Halstead, who knew much of the inner working of the White House, were also called upon.⁷² Success did not come immediately, and finally,

Horatio Ames returned to Washington, button-holed Brandegee in the Willard hotel, and insisted that he arrange for a meeting with Lincoln. After this meeting, Ames received a contract for fifteen Ames guns, of 100 pounds or larger, at 85 cents a pound.⁷³

As the war progressed, it seemed increasingly difficult for small businessmen to secure a contract without the aid of a middleman.⁷⁴ Influence pedlars had flocked to Washington. Members of the state legislature entered into the bidding. William W. Welch, a former Republican legislator, was successful in securing a contract for 18,000 Enfield rifles, although he did not possess a factory for their fabrication. The friendship of Cornelius S. Bushnell and Gideon Welles was of value in securing the contract for the construction of the *Monitor*. Religious affiliations, as well as economic and political relationships, were of importance in securing contracts. In Connecticut, Attorney General Williams and Quartermaster General Hathaway were Baptists, and Baptists seemed to secure more than their share of the state contracts until Williams and Hathaway were dismissed from office for negligence or misconduct.⁷⁵

Industries in the state quickly expanded as army orders flowed into the state. The pressure was greatest on the arms makers. Samuel Colt, with an audacity which shocked his business friends, reclaimed 250 acres of land, attracted five hundred carpenters and laborers, and built a three-story brick structure crowned with an onion shaped gold and blue cupola topped with a charging colt. In a short time he had doubled the potential capacity of his factory. Other factories, such as Christian Sharpe's Rifle Company, which had absorbed the Whitney Arms Factory in 1858, pushed production to capacity.⁷⁶ The demands for munitions were such and the opportunities for profit were so great that many with little or no experience or capital assumed the obligations of army contracts. James D. Mowry of Norwich secured a contract for 30,000 Springfield rifles and confidently set out to deliver them although he had facilities only to make the stocks and depended on sub-contractors for the rest of the parts. William W. Welch, the Norfolk manufacturer, incorporated the Norfolk Arms Company, secured a contract for 18,000 muskets, sub-contracted a portion, while he completed his factory. The factory was completed within three months,

and within eight, it is reported that he was producing 1,000 rifles a week.⁷⁷

Factories which had been devoted to the production of consumer goods were rapidly and with a minimum of difficulty converted to the production of war materials. The Pierpont and Tolles factory at Unionville, which produced a great variety of products, added gun stocks to their inventory. The iron works in Litchfield County were producing some of the finest ordnance in the world by the end of 1862. The Holley Iron Works of Salisbury, in addition to producing iron and steel, produced light artillery. The Collins Axe Factory delivered 7,500 sabres thirty days after receiving an order. The carriage manufacturers, who had feared ruin through the loss of the southern carriage trade, were soon straining their facilities to produce army wagons. In 1862, the state enjoyed an unparalleled prosperity due largely to the state's war industries. The arms makers, such as Colt's and Sharpe's at Hartford, Whitney's at New Haven, and the Norwich Arms Factory, were working at unprecedented capacity. The Hazard powder works produced more than twelve tons of powder daily, with an annual production valued at \$1,000,000.⁷⁸ New companies entered the munitions field as the economic opportunities of the war were foreseen. In addition to the significant contribution which the munitions industries made to the war effort, the capital amassed and the managerial skill developed in this industry were important to the industrial growth which followed the war.

The immediate impact of the war, except in the field of arms and munitions manufacture, was to reduce markets. The cotton manufacturers recovered from this loss slowly. Particularly hard hit were those companies which marketed the coarse products used by the slave population. Some, such as the Union Manufacturing Company of Marlborough, closed their doors never to open them again. When the orders of the Federal government for heavy cotton products were received, most of the manufacturers quickly resumed production. There was no lack of cotton in the first year of the war as enterprising businessmen, such as the associates of Governor Buckingham, had placed all available coasters in service in the Winter of 1860-61 to build up the supply of cotton.⁸⁰

In general, the textile manufacturers were operating profitably. Tailors were able to adapt quickly to machine cutting processes, and the Charles Company of Hartford, for example, quickly delivered 20,000 uniforms by August 1, 1861. These were of poor quality, as



(Courtesy Fairfield Historical Society)

FAIRFIELD—SOUTHPORT HARBOR

were some of the other goods produced under pressure, but in the early months of the war the need for production in quantity exceeded the demand for quality.⁸¹ As the supply of raw cotton became exhausted in 1862, the manufacture of other textiles was emphasized. Silk manufacture benefited from the demand for luxury goods. An effort was made to meet the demand for woolens by adding machinery and increasing the labor supply, but there was no general expansion of the mills. Woolens benefited from a wartime tariff and an expanding market. The manufacture of “shoddy,” material made from reclaimed

wool, although bitterly complained about by the troops, returned unbelievable profits. Unlike the pattern in Massachusetts, Connecticut cotton factories did not convert to the production of wool. Instead, when the supply of cotton was exhausted, the cotton mills were closed to await more favorable conditions. As Federal forces gained control of cotton producing regions in the deep South, cotton gradually again became available.⁸² In 1863-64 discerning businessmen began to pour capital into the industry. Significant in the expanding industry were the Ashland and the Occum companies, and the Donemah, the Sprague, and the Mason mills. In the last two years of the war, approximately one-third of a million new spindles were put into operation in eastern Connecticut alone. The state had benefited from wartime demands, an expanding population, increased consumer demands, a growth of capital, knowledge of machine techniques, and a favorable tariff policy, all of which had enabled the establishment of an industry of importance in the development of the nineteenth century economy.⁸³

Shipbuilders benefited immeasurably from government contracts during the war. Mystic, which was the center of shipbuilding in Connecticut, is credited with having constructed 30,000 tons of shipping during the war, including more steamers, it is claimed, than Maine and Massachusetts combined. In addition to the yards at Mystic, where the Grossmans and the Mallorys were the leaders, shipping yards along the Connecticut River were reopened. Except for Gildersleeve's at Portland, which could produce shipping of any size, most of the river yards produced only vessels for commercial purposes. Connecticut shipyards doubled their production during the first year of the war, trebled it by 1863, and maintained the same level of production throughout 1864.⁸⁴

The established shipping industries had sought to maintain a monopoly of the water carrying trade. To check the ruinous rate wars which had followed the Panic of 1857, the leaders of the industry had acted in consort in 1860 to exclude new competitors, divide the traffic, and fix rates. The war had the effect of stripping Connecticut waterways of steam powered vessels. Those available at the beginning of the war were sold at a handsome profit or leased to the Government on even more attractive terms. To provide the inland transportation necessary

for forwarding military supplies and civilian goods, there arose a number of independent shipping lines. As steamers became more available, these new lines began to challenge the older firms, which therefore maintained their freight rates at the 1859 level while doubling passenger fares in an attempt to push the new lines to the wall. The movement of goods during the war, however, demanded all the transportation available and the independents were able to survive. Their future was imperiled, however, in 1865, when the Hartford and New York Steamboat Company secured a discriminatory tax benefit of two cents a ton on all shipping, steam or sail, above 50 tons burden. Not freedom, but control, was to characterize water transportation in the postwar period.⁸⁵

Railroads, "in a state of arrested development" when the war began, were little, if any, better able to perform the services of a common carrier at the war's end. The railroads took advantage of the shortage of water and rail transportation and increased their rates as much as the traffic would bear. By 1862, most of them were clear of debt, dividends were mounting, and stocks were in demand. Stocks of the New Haven, for example, advanced 20 points in the first year of the war, and in the next five months advanced another 40 to 185 points. Railroading in Connecticut reached its "golden age of profits" in 1864.⁸⁶ These increased earnings, however, were not plowed back into the roads. Roadbeds went unkept and rolling stock was permitted to deteriorate. Efforts toward consolidation were spurned, except in the instance of the merger of the New London and Northampton with the Hamden and Hampshire.⁸⁷ The flagrant disregard of the public interest resulted in a legislative investigation, but the railroads successfully convinced the committee that the scarcity of labor and materials made any major repairs impossible at that time. The spectre of state control loomed over the deliberations concerning rates, but the railroads had powerful friends and were permitted to continue relatively unchecked until the end of the war. The roads, however, had amassed a capital reserve which could be used for improvement and expansion in the postwar period.

The strength of Connecticut's economy was in the reserve capital available in the years after Appomattox.

The fiscal policies of the state encouraged the accumulation of the capital needed for the expanding economy. In 1861, the farmers opposed any increase in taxes, which left the business and financial institutions untouched. The latter resolutely opposed any taxes on their assets. The tax problem was further complicated by the difficulty of taxing savings banks and insurance companies and by the exemptions which were enjoyed by various bond and railroad securities. Accordingly bonds in the amount of \$2,000,000 were issued to finance the first enlistments.⁸⁹ In subsequent years, taxes were increased, but never sufficiently to meet the extraordinary expenses. The state's indebtedness continued to mount until, in 1864, the funded debt amounted to \$8,000,000 and the unfunded to \$1,249,660. Apparently, this deficit financing was not necessitated by lack of capital. William Eaton, who, in 1863, was seeking to place the state on a "pay as you go" program, claimed that money was so plentiful it was seeking investment. "T'won't do to say money is plentiful in every man's pocket," countered the Chairman of the Finance Committee, who proceeded to recommend a continuation of deficit financing.⁹⁰ Eaton's recommendations were adopted almost in total a year later, but then the war was near an end. The state's policy of borrowing and not levying taxes had permitted industry to accumulate more capital than would have otherwise been possible.

Private capital was also built up in a number of other ways. The investments and savings of soldiers constituted one of the most important sources of capital. The total saving cannot be calculated, but an index to its extent is the fact that \$57,000 is known to have been dispatched in one month by the soldiers rendezvoused at New Haven. Insurance companies amassed large sums. The Connecticut Mutual trebled its business during the war: the number of policies written increased from 26 to 82 million. The Travelers, which was formed in 1864, wrote 27,000 policies in its first year.⁹²

NOTES—CHAPTER XXIII

¹ William John Niven, Jr., "The Time of the Whirlwind; A Study in the Political, Social, and Economic History of Connecticut from 1861 to 1875" (doctoral thesis), (microfilm, Ann Arbor, 1954), pp. 8-10; Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 141-45.

- ² *Ibid.*, p. 152; Samuel G. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham, The War Governor of Connecticut* (Springfield, Mass., 1894).
- ³ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 149.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 157-58.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 157-67; Buckingham, *William A. Buckingham*, pp. 31-43.
- ⁶ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 176-77.
- ⁷ Hartford *Times*, quoted in Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 179.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 180-81.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 176-81; W. A. Crofut and John M. Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut during the War, 1861-65* (New York, 1868), pp. 38-69.
- ¹⁰ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 157-201; Buckingham, *William A. Buckingham*, pp. 202-23.
- ¹¹ Diary of Sidney Stanley, Jan. 10, 1866, quoted in Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 215.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 215-36; Buckingham, *William A. Buckingham*, pp. 247-70.
- ¹³ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 73-74.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 73-78.
- ¹⁶ Allan Nevins, *The War of the Union; the Improvised War* (New York, 1959), pp. 170-77.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 170; Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 38-69.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 62.
- ¹⁹ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 32-34; Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 175.
- ²⁰ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 31-32.
- ²¹ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 92-100.
- ²² Buckingham, *William A. Buckingham*, pp. 141, 154-57.
- ²³ Coite repaid this sum subsequently, Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 39-41.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42; Buckingham, *William A. Buckingham*, pp. 204-208.
- ²⁵ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 120-202; J. G. Randall, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York, 1937), pp. 578-83.
- ²⁶ Douglas Southall Freeman, *Richard E. Lee, A Biography* (New York, 1934), Vol. II, p. 343.
- ²⁷ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 203-21; Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 290-316.
- ²⁸ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 264-87. The Connecticut Eighth, Eleventh, Fourteenth, and Sixteenth regiments participated in the battle of Antietam.
- ²⁹ Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 314-15.
- ³⁰ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 288-97; Freeman, *Lee*, Vol. II, pp. 443-74. The Eleventh, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Twenty-First were also at Fredericksburg although they were not heavily engaged. The Seventeenth had moved from Baltimore across the Rappahannock at Stafford Court House.
- ³¹ Buckingham, *William A. Buckingham*, pp. 248-49; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 42-45.
- ³² Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 202.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 207-208; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 42-45; Buckingham, *William A. Buckingham*, pp. 250-51.
- ³⁴ Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, p. 411.
- ³⁵ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," p. 46.
- ³⁶ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 208-11; Buckingham, *William A. Buckingham*, pp. 256-67.

- ³⁷ These included the Fifth, Seventh, Eighth, Eleventh, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Twentieth, Twenty-first, and Twenty-second regular regiments and the Twenty-Seventh of the nine-month Volunteers.
- ³⁸ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 297-340. The Twenty-eighth Volunteers were stationed at Pensacola and the Twelfth and Thirteenth regiments and the Twenty-third, Twenty-sixth, and Twenty-eighth Volunteers were at New Orleans. The Ninth Regiment and the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Volunteers were at Baton Rouge.
- ³⁹ This included the Connecticut Eighth, Eleventh, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth. They were later joined by the Twenty-first and Twenty-second. Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 330-40.
- ⁴⁰ Freeman, *Lee*, Vol. II, pp. 483-84, 501-02.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 504.
- ⁴² Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, p. 358. The Fifth and Twentieth of the Twelfth Corps and the Fourteenth and Twenty-seventh of the Second Corps advanced in company to Chancellorsville, while the Seventeenth of the Eleventh Corps proceeded by a shorter route.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 361-77.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 378-96; Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 515-24; Freeman, *Lee*, Vol. III, pp. 18-161.
- ⁴⁵ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 397-401; Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 528-31; Robert V. Bruce, *Lincoln and the Tools of War* (New York, 1956), pp. 159-66.
- ⁴⁶ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 401-19; Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, p. 581. The Twelfth, Thirteenth, Twenty-fourth, Twenty-fifth, and Twenty-sixth Volunteers were the most actively engaged Connecticut regiments. The remainder of the western force was on duty at other points.
- ⁴⁷ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 240-41.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 242-48; Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 456-60; Buckingham, *William A. Buckingham*, pp. 274-84; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 51-52.
- ⁴⁹ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 252-54.
- ⁵⁰ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," p. 51.
- ⁵¹ *Journal*, House of Representatives, May, 1864, p. 31.
- ⁵² Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, pp. 248-52.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 255.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 255-56; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," p. 52; *Journal*, House of Representatives, May, 1864, pp. 30-31.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," p. 52; Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 601-02.
- ⁵⁶ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," p. 53.
- ⁵⁷ Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 539-47; Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 569-611. In this campaign the First and Fourteenth Connecticut Regiments and the Second Connecticut Artillery were in the thick of the fight with the Eighth, Eleventh, Thirteenth, and Twenty-first in supporting roles.
- ⁵⁸ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 603-28; Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 547-50.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 568. The Eighteenth Connecticut regiment had returned from its furlough on April 9, in time to participate in this campaign, Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 638-45.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 714-29; Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 566-70.

- ⁶¹ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 692-707.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 755-74. The remnants of the Sixteenth Regiment, which had escaped capture, remained on Roanoke Island.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 794.
- ⁶⁵ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 61-69.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 149-50.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 150, 463-73.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 151; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 56-59.
- ⁶⁹ Crofut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, pp. 183-86.
- ⁷¹ Bruce, *Lincoln and the Tools of War*, pp. 233-35.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 235.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 236-48.
- ⁷⁴ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," p. 93.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 93-95.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 82-84.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 86.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 91; Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 202.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90, 103.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 86-91.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 112-13.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 106-18.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 122-28.
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 127-30.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-30.
- ⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 130-35.
- ⁸⁹ *Journal*, Senate, 1861, pp. 510, 530, 550.
- ⁹⁰ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 145-47.
- ⁹² Emerson David Fite, *Social and Industrial Conditions in the North During the Civil War* (New York, 1910), pp. 126-29.

Chapter XXIV

The Period of Readjustment

THE FIRST post-war legislature quickly wound up the tag ends of the military effort and consigned it to memorialization. The sole additional recognition of military service was the extension to members of the regular arm and the reserve corps of the bounty of thirty dollars and family allowances, which had been extended only to volunteers of state organizations during the war.¹ The Assembly failed to approve Governor Buckingham's recommendation that payments be made to families of prisoners of war and refused a bill which would have made the state liable for the debts which the towns had incurred in the prosecution of the war.² The towns were left to make any payments due draftees or those who furnished substitutes. The Assembly was quick to confirm, however, the possibly extra-legal acts passed by several of the towns during the war. The Assembly also authorized the towns to use fifteen percent of their assessments for the erection of monuments honoring their heroes.³

The state debt had increased to \$10,523,000 since 1861, but was safely within the state's ability to pay. The indebtedness was only four and one-half percent of the grand list, for this had increased \$40,000,000 during the conflict and \$17,000,000 of the increase had been during the last year of the war.⁴ Moreover, the debt could be liquidated without cutting into the capital available for industrial expansion by virtue of a tax system under which the farmer was paying in 1865 four times the amount of his taxes in 1861, while the mutual insurance companies and manufacturers had warded off all but one moderate increase in their taxes.⁵

During the same period, the deposits of the savings banks of the

state had increased approximately \$10,000,000, or by fifty percent. The resources of other banks in the state appear to have risen accordingly. Twenty-three of the banks had joined the national banking system. The remaining 49 banks in the state, according to the Governor's re-



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

NEW HAVEN

port, held, in specie on hand, in notes in circulation, and in deposits, an amount equal to that of all banks in 1861. The total capital of the Connecticut banks in the national banking system was slightly more than half that of the banks operating under state charters. The ability of the financial institutions in the state to finance an expanding economy, then, had increased by at least fifty percent since 1861. The soundness of these banks is indicated by the approximately one to one ratio of investments to capital and deposits. The monies invested in United

States securities, the notes in circulation, and the discounts totaled \$19,459,442, while the capital and deposits totaled \$18,371,652.⁶

The banks were the leaders and greatest beneficiaries of the post-war boom. Commercial banks and State banks could charge all the interest the traffic would bear and could invest without hindering legal restraints. Savings banks had been founded to encourage small accounts and were forbidden by law to accept an account of more than \$1,000 from a single individual. This restriction was ignored and deposits in these banks increased on the average of four million a year from 1865 to 1867, and more thereafter. Savings banks were also restrained by law from investing more than fifty percent of their deposits in real estate. The business and factory expansion of 1866 depleted their monies available for this use and the housing boom in 1868 made the demand on the savings banks greater than their resources. The banks of the post-war period were insensitive to social responsibility. They were confident of the future, resentful of efforts to control speculation, insistent on a free money market and a higher rate of interest. They were not deterred from disregarding a law or interpreting it to their advantage. A bonus of from forty-five to fifty dollars a thousand was customary to secure a loan. The doctrines of laissez-faire were pointed to in justification, and the public interpreted such practices as freedom of contract. Debtors had little choice. In 1872, the banks sought absolution of their sins from the legislature.⁷ The law, ostensibly to protect the small borrower, continued six percent as the legal rate of interest, but a greater rate could be charged if it were agreed to in writing. All contracts, usurious under former laws, were validated.⁸ The law had been made to conform to the business ethic.

Drastic changes were necessary in the transportation system before it could meet the demands of the industrial changes which were in progress. The shipping boom which resulted from the opening of southern markets at the end of the war soon faltered amidst the political strife of reconstruction. Additional capital was therefore available for the further development of railroads in the state. The establishment of a network of through transportation was dependent upon legislation authorizing the construction of bridges to span the river. Such legislation was opposed by the powerful shipping interest and by the inland

towns whose principal commercial ties with New York and Boston were by water routes. Permissive legislation was supported by the coastal cities, which after the decline of southern trade, were anxious to strengthen their ties with commercial centers by an improvement of the railroad system. Since the issue of bridging the river was to be resolved by legislative action, both groups sought to exert influence on the Assembly through powerful lobbies. After three years of bitter debate, the construction of bridges was authorized. This was a first step in the expansion of the railway system and an illustration of harmony between politics and industry which was to become a characteristic pattern.⁹

The transition of Connecticut industry from a war to a peacetime base was not one of uninterrupted success. The rural and agricultural towns, such as Canton and East Hartford, where powder mills had mushroomed during the war, were hardest hit by the cutbacks of the military contracts. Many companies, especially those in the munitions industry, disappeared entirely. The Colt Company bridged the gap by renting a portion of their plant to those engaged in the rising tool machine industry. In general, the industries which were the most successful in meeting the challenge of the post-war era were those with adequate capital and labor, in proximity to power and transportation facilities, and with the foresight and ability to diversify their production.¹⁰

Specialization, in some cases the basis for a successful enterprise, in many instances proved calamitous. Francis A. Pratt and Amos Whitney combined their talents before the war to begin the manufacture of machine tools and continued to enjoy success. Others, who developed skills during the war, successfully transferred their abilities to the production of consumer goods. On the other hand, capitalists, eager for quick profits, poured money into the textile industry in eastern Connecticut only to find within a decade that they had overspecialized. The relatively unskilled labor group which had coalesced around this industry was to place the area at a disadvantage for years to come.¹²

Wage earners had not benefited significantly from the expansion in the economy. There was full employment during the war, but low wages, high prices, and shortages of critical commodities had resulted in a lower level of comfort.¹³ The ten-hour law passed in 1855 was being

flagrantly violated in the post-war years, especially in the textile mills of eastern Connecticut.¹⁴ It is estimated that between twelve and fifteen thousand women and over three thousand children below the age of ten were employed from 66 to 75 hours a week. Factory inspectors disregarded the law and constituted scant protection for laborers. One Republican appointee, in fact, was imprisoned for five years for brutally beating his own child. The number of unions in the state had increased from two to six during the war. In the post-war period, as unfavorable working conditions persisted, Workingmen's associations sought to gain favorable legislation through political action.¹⁵ Both parties bid for the workingman's vote, and, in 1867, the General Assembly recognized eight hours as constituting a lawful day's work. This was an important principle in the subsequent history of the labor movement, but its immediate effectiveness was lessened by the continuation of the liberty of contract clause which made longer hours lawful if they were mutually agreed to by the contracting parties. Frequently, employment was dependent upon the acceptance of such a contract.¹⁶

Lincoln had kept the radicals under control in the last years of the war. They supported him, although reluctantly, in the Presidential campaign of 1864.¹⁷ Lincoln had used the patronage whip to keep federal office holders in line.¹⁸ In his efforts to maintain control, the President had a willing ally in James Dixon, the conservative stalwart from Connecticut, who had remained in favor at the White House even though he had supported McClellan in the presidential campaign of 1864. Dixon was friendly with his Senate colleague, Lafayette Foster, and had great influence with the Congressional delegation and the Republican press of Hartford and Norwich.¹⁹

The Radicals, however, had attained great strength. They had been the unrelenting prosecutors of the war and were further strengthened by the final victory. The assassination of President Lincoln tended to confirm their policies in the public mind. Governor Buckingham, who supported the Radicals firmly, had grown in public esteem throughout the war and was returned by the electorate in 1865 for his final term as Governor. The powerful insurance companies of Hartford and the textile industry of eastern Connecticut made their financial and their political resources available to the Radicals. In addition,



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

NEW LONDON—HARBOR SCENE

victory had intensified nationalism in the North, and the Radicals, identified as apostles of burgeoning nationalism and of a stringent policy toward the South, profited.²⁰

The Democratic Party believed that suffrage was a privilege conferred or withheld by a state and supported the President's plan of reconstruction, as did the conservative Republicans. The radical Republicans, on the other hand, were willing to use Federal power to advance the cause of the Negro and, as events were to prove, the cause of

the Republican Party. The differences became more apparent when Johnson launched a plan of reconstruction in the Summer of 1865. The breach widened as the Radicals sought to push through a more extreme program and assumed chasmal proportions when Johnson vetoed the Freedmen's Bureau in the Spring of 1866.²¹

In the state campaign of 1866, the Democrats clearly supported the President, but the Republicans did not adopt an unequivocal position. The Republican standard bearer was Joseph Hawley, a Brevet Major General, a founder of the Republican Party in the state, and the Editor of the *Hartford Press*. Hawley personally subscribed to the tenets of the radical elements of his party, but was so sensitive to the conservative attitudes within the state that he refused to articulate his position. He listened complacently while the Chairman of the Republican convention combined an endorsement of Johnson with a pledge to support the actions of Congress. In his ambivalence, Hawley seemed to have overreached himself. The Democrats denounced him as a deceiver of the people and the Radicals wearied of his fence straddling. It seemed to the latter that it was time to take a stand. After Johnson's veto of the Freedmen's Bureau, the Connecticut congressional delegation had almost immediately swung to the support of the Radicals and Johnson had lashed out at them for criticizing his veto.

The Democrats moved to secure Johnson's endorsement of their ticket. There is little doubt that the wealthy Democratic nominee, James E. English, who had served as a Congressman during the war, had sympathetic audiences with both Gideon Welles and the President. These conferences fell short of securing a formal endorsement, but English encouraged the propagation of the idea that the President would take retaliatory measures against those who voted contrary to his program. Some of the conservative Republicans, notably Henry Cleveland, the *Hartford Postmaster*, began to abandon the listing ship and endorsed English. Other Republican political leaders, with Hawley among them, went to Washington to right their political craft. The President expressed a preference for those who supported his views, but announced that he would not enter into a purely local election. The Republicans publicized this as support by the President of the entire ticket. The distraught Cleveland requested Johnson to accept his

resignation if the President disapproved of his support of English. Johnson refused the resignation and the Democrats accepted this as tacit support. Hawley resisted pressure from the Radicals to take a more determined stand, and the Chairman of the Party blandly announced that the Party was taking no issue with the President. Hawley won the election, but by a scant margin of 541 votes, which could not be interpreted as an endorsement of a program or even of opposition to one. The basic differences between radicals and conservatives continued to grow sharper, however.²²

The Radicals gained control of the Republican Party. They nominated a radical, Orris S. Ferry, for Senator in 1866, sent only radicals as delegates to the national convention of Republicans that year, and became extreme in their denunciation of the President's plan of reconstruction. In alarm and protest, there arose an independent conservative party which endorsed Johnson's program. At the risk of political success, solidarity within the Republican Party had been achieved by the Spring of 1867.²³

Each of the major political parties held firm to its principles on the issue of reconstruction and on the use of Federal power. Labor was the new element in the campaign. The Republican-dominated legislature of 1866 had failed to approve the eight hour day and the Workingmen had formed a separate Party. After drafting a platform dedicated to the advancement of labor, the Workingmen announced that they would support the party which would support their platform. Later, after the Workingmen endorsed the Democratic ticket, the Republicans launched an aggressive campaign to split the labor vote. The popular Democrat, James E. English, defeated Hawley by a narrow margin and began a two year period of conservative administration.²⁴

In 1869, the Republicans benefited from the success of the national party and the question of the ratification of the fifteenth amendment. Since the war there had been general agreement on the immorality of slavery and the General Assembly had approved the thirteenth amendment in May, 1865. Yet, there had developed opposition to extending suffrage to the 1,500 or 2,000 negroes in the state. The electorate in 1865 had rejected a proposed amendment which would have extended suffrage rights.²⁵ It was assumed that the issue was

unpopular in the state. It was believed that the plan of the national congressmen to enfranchise the Negro had contributed to the defeat of the state Republicans in 1867. James Dixon, an ardent foe of enfranchisement, made it an issue in his campaign for election to the



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BRIDGEPORT

House after the expiration of his term in the Senate. Dixon gave convincing proof that the Radicals sought to establish a permanent Republican control of the nation's political machinery by securing a solid Negro vote in the South. The Democrats waged a stubborn campaign, yet the Republicans elected their state ticket and all but one of the Congressional candidates. Dixon was defeated by 600 votes in Hartford. The Republicans interpreted their success as a mandate from the people. They quickly ratified the fifteenth amendment and the

electorate confirmed the action. In Connecticut, this action disposed of the last of the reconstruction amendments.²⁶

Once the freedom and the rights of the Negro were legally assured, Connecticut began to separate from the Radical Reconstructionists. The state's position was characterized by Senator Orris S. Ferry, who, after voting for the impeachment of Johnson in 1866, moved away from the Radicals. By 1870, papers which normally expressed Republican sentiment, such as the *Hartford Post*, were attacking the flagrant abuse of military reconstruction. The split between the Connecticut Republicans and the national party became obvious in relation to the question of Chinese exclusion. Joseph Hawley of Connecticut strongly denounced this policy from a public platform shared by President Grant, who supported exclusion. The corruption of the Grant administration and the demand that he be removed from office provided a moralistic excuse for returning to a comfortable political conservatism. Many prominent Republicans in the state defected, but Grant carried the state by a margin of some 4,000 votes.²⁷

The effective purpose of politics from 1869 to 1873 was the maintenance of the status quo. Political power came to those who would cooperate in the manipulations of the financial institutions for such ends as blocking legislation to regulate the financing of railroads and endorsing the favorable tax laws for insurance companies.²⁸ Cries for reforms, except in rare instances, fell on the deaf ears of those who supported the cult of the counting house. Where the clamor for prohibition and for labor reform could not be ignored, it was echoed in electioneering to secure votes, but was not translated into major legislation. Liquor legislation was limited to forbidding liquor shops to be open on the Sabbath and permitting town officials to close them on election days, except in Hartford and New Haven.²⁹ Labor legislation was limited to the requirement that children under fourteen could not be employed unless they had attended school for three months out of the twelve next *preceding each year* of employment.³⁰ This was enforceable by a penalty of \$100 upon the employer and after 1871 also by a penalty of \$5.00 per week, for a maximum of thirteen weeks, upon the parent or guardian, who did not send his child to school when he was temporarily discharged to attend, except that it did not apply to



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children mentally or physically unfit for schooling or if the pecuniary circumstances of their family required continual absence from school as judged by the board of school visitors of the town in which the family resided.³¹ In 1872, the law made it clear that the three months of schooling were required out of *every* year and provided that at least six weeks of the education should be consecutive. Financial circumstances were no longer stated as grounds for exception, but home instruction was permitted as a substitute.³² The eyes of political leaders were fixed

upon the edifices of progress rising about them; the more subtle needs of society were not seen. Neither party was capable of forming challenging programs and both supported matters of regional interest, such as the resumption of specie payments, so it seemed to matter little who occupied the seats of the Assembly. An inert complacency settled over all. There was scant difference in the apparent social and economic philosophies of James Edward English, the Democratic Governor in 1870, and of Marshall Jewell, the Republican Governor in 1869, 1871, and 1872.³³

Frequently, politicians of both parties, in their eagerness to secure the spoils of victory, transgressed the bounds permitted in the elective process. The factional fights of the "*Register* clique" with the New Haven Irish and the close relations of the Democrats with New York's Tweed Ring indicated the low state of politics. The free junkets of Democrats to Tweed's Greenwich home became a matter of comment and the alleged connections of James E. English with the New York politician became an important issue in the campaign of 1871. Political manipulation reached its lowest ebb in this election and there was so much confusion it was not possible to tell who had won. A joint legislative committee was appointed to investigate and was given complete inquisitorial powers. The Republicans forecast irregularities in New Haven's fourth ward, but were surprised when it was found that 101 votes which should have been credited to English had been counted for Jewell. The Republicans asserted that the ballot box must have been tampered with and the minions of the Post Office and Custom House, well supplied with cash, secured enough affidavits from voters who stated that they had voted for Jewell to give him a majority in this district. The affidavits were accepted by the investigating committee, which gave Jewell an official majority. This was confirmed in the Assembly by a straight party vote. Although irregularities prevailed in the years which followed, there seems to have been a growing concern for morality in public affairs.³⁴

Political bitterness was intensified, however, by the dispute over the location of the state capitol. Since New Haven had merged with Connecticut in colonial days, state houses had been maintained in both Hartford and New Haven and the Assembly had sat alternately in each

city. Hartford and New Haven had competed for railroad terminals, war contracts, and industrial leadership, but none of these was more important to New Haven than the location of the capitol. This was important to assuage its discontent over the loss of independence.³⁵ The pressure for a single seat of government continued to mount until 1871. In that year a five man commission was appointed to proceed with plans for a new state house. The Assembly voted \$500,000 to match the \$500,000 proffered by Hartford and authorized that city to issue bonds up to \$1,000,000 for the construction. The state also agreed to donate the old State House to the city. The New Haven delegation waged a determined stand, led by Charles Ingersoll, to block the proceedings. After failing in a motion to adjourn the 1871 session, the New Haven delegation sought unsuccessfully in 1872 the privilege of building a capitol in New Haven without cost to the state. It remained necessary, however, to make it constitutional for the Assembly to meet solely in Hartford. A proposed amendment to this effect had failed of passage in the 1871 session, but, in 1872, a similar resolution was passed by the simple majority of 126 to 103 which was sufficient for passage on the first reading. On second reading, in 1873, the measure received the required two-thirds majority, because there had been a shift of 60 votes, 44 of which came from New London, Litchfield, and Fairfield counties. New Haven proceeded to express her discontent by raising again the question of reforming the basis of representation.³⁶

There were many valid reasons for reforming the method of representation. Despite repeated efforts to accomplish this reform, the method had not been changed since 1818.³⁷ In 1872, ten towns with a total population of 7,274 and a grand list of \$3,912,557 sent 16 representatives to the lower house, while 10 cities with a population of 185,638 and a grand list of more than \$134,000,000 sent the same number. Bridgeport, the third largest city in the state, had one representative, while nearby Redding, with a population of 1,600, had two.³⁸ Representation in the Senate was also disproportionate. Seven of the Senate's 21 members represented more than half the state's population, while another seven represented less than one-fifth.³⁹

The move for a constitutional convention to alter the basis of representation, as before, reaped the determined opposition of the

rural towns, and failed to arouse great popular interest or to secure broad legislative support. However, in 1872 a number of citizens in New Haven and Bridgeport organized a Constitutional Reform Association to secure an equitable representation.⁴⁰ The Association elicited



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SAYBROOK POINT LIGHT HOUSE, OR LYNDE LIGHT (1935 PHOTO)

numerous proposals for reform arrangements, including one from a rising young New Haven lawyer, Simeon E. Baldwin, a member of the Association and legal counsel for the New York and New Haven Railroad.⁴¹ Apparently understanding the difficulties of securing any changes in the lower house, Baldwin proposed redistricting the Senate and making it a popular branch of the government.⁴² The Association directed its arguments to members of the General Assembly in a pamphlet, "Consideration on Constitutional Reform in Connecticut." In

this it was proposed that representation be based on population, and, ever mindful of the balance of power in the Assembly, it was suggested that the alteration be made by means of a convention rather than through a constitutional amendment.⁴³ The press was attracted to the activities of the Association, and this forced the political parties to take a stand on the issue. After a spirited discussion, the Democrats adopted the aims of the Association. The Republicans split along urban-rural lines.⁴⁴ The proponents of the proposal sought to assuage the fears of the small towns by including, in the bill submitted to the legislature, a guarantee that each town would have at least one representative.⁴⁵ Support for the proposed constitutional convention was sapped by additional suggestions designed to correct other specific defects of government. The fate of the bill could be anticipated. It was rejected by a vote of 140 to 69. The proposal for a constitutional convention was carried over for the next two sessions of the General Assembly, but was rejected in each.⁴⁷

At least in part because of its official endorsement of reform in the basis of representation to accord with population, the Democratic Party somewhat undeservedly became identified as the party of reform and of urban interests. In the final vote on the constitutional convention, only 16 Republicans voted for the bill and 84 Republicans voted against it, while 51 Democrats voted in favor of the bill and 58 opposed. Among those absent were 22 Democrats as well as 10 Republicans.⁴⁸ The Democrats had a sufficient majority to pass the bill, but the public lost count of the Democrats who did not vote for the measure when the *New Haven Palladium*, a Republican newspaper, regretted that the affirmative vote had been solely by Democrats, while the Republicans had opposed the measure. Momentarily, at least, there must have been many who believed that the reform could not be carried on within the framework of the Republican Party. Simeon E. Baldwin, a rising Republican, headed the resultant movement of the Reform Association in the Fall of 1873 in its unsuccessful effort to establish a third party.⁴⁹ A change in representation was not accomplished, but when minorities in urban centers sought to realize their objectives through political action, they turned to the Democratic Party.

The minorities in the urban centers became the natural allies of

the Democrats in their effort to unseat the Republicans from power. The Republicans, a majority party since 1865, had rebuffed minorities whether they had articulated their programs as emigrants, as laborers, or as proponents of a particular cause such as prohibition. The Republican Party had powerful support from the owners of the textile industries in eastern Connecticut and from the insurance companies, but it became increasingly more dependent upon rural areas for numerical majorities. The Democrats had maintained a surprising degree of unity during the hectic days of reconstruction and with the urban vote were able to interrupt the Republican monopoly.⁵⁰

From 1873 to 1879, the Democrats had uninterrupted control of the machinery of state government. Charles R. Ingersoll, member of a prominent New Haven family and New Haven's representative in Congress during the war years and in the early years of reconstruction, won sizeable majorities over his Republican opponents and served three terms as Governor. During the last term, the Governor's tenure was extended from one to two years.⁵¹ In 1875, the Democrats held both Senatorial seats and secured three of the four Congressional seats as well as winning the Governor's office. The new Governor was Richard Dudley Hubbard, who, from comparatively meager beginnings, rose in the profession of law and served as U. S. Representative from Hartford for one term before becoming Governor. The Democrats gained control of the lower house of the Assembly in 1873 for the first time in twenty years.⁵²

At no time during these years did the Democrats possess the necessary two-thirds majority to amend the constitution without Republican assistance. After the move for the constitutional convention had been scuttled, an amendment was passed and ratified which allowed two representatives to each town possessing or attaining a population of 5,000 and allowing other towns to retain their existing representation. In 1876, it was further provided that new towns and those under 2,500 were to have no representatives.⁵³ This was perhaps as much as the Democrats could accomplish on this point, yet, in the entirety of their legislative actions, the Democrats failed to fit the image which had been sketched of them.

At the beginning of the last term of this Democratic interlude,

Governor Hubbard suggested that if lawmakers “would conscientiously give as much time and study to needed reforms in the body politic,” as they gave to partisan politics, civil government would be improved.⁵⁴ He concluded one of his recommendations with the warning that “there is no use of scratching the skin where incision and surgery are



(Courtesy "Meriden Record-Journal")

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needed.”⁵⁵ The Democrats in the session expended some effort in perfecting the governmental machinery. They changed the date of elections to November; passed a proposed amendment providing a two year term for members of the Assembly, which would conform to the Governor’s new term; and passed another proposed amendment making a change in the procedure of appointing judges. They also provided for the appointment of a joint committee on engrossed bills in line with Hubbard’s request for reforms to insure that bills sent to the Governor at least accurately and legibly record legislative action.⁵⁶ In general, however, the Democrats chose to patch or ignore rather than to basically

reform or boldly reconstruct. Governor Hubbard's recommendations did not call for radical changes in basic thinking. He was filled with solicitude for the railroads, which were "entitled to be treated with consideration,"⁵⁷ for the insurance companies, a "much exposed, often abused, and most important interest,"⁵⁸ and the banks, which might be "embarrassed" in earning satisfactory dividends for depositors.⁵⁹ In this context, suggestions for regulations of these institutions and for reforms of corporation laws seem less ominous than routine and a law to indicate clearly that "willful false swearing by officers of financial institutions" in their required returns to the State could be punished as perjury does not seem unreasonable.⁶⁰ The Governor could not accord striking laborers the right to prevent others from filling the positions they vacated,⁶¹ nor, in fact, go beyond such constants in Connecticut political thought as complacency in regard to the schools and support for stringent economy in state and national governments.⁶² Other real concerns of Governor Hubbard have continued to concern all Governors until the present moment. Among these are the practice of the Assembly in waiting until just before adjournment to pass all major and in fact most legislation, correction of the "crying and scandalous" delays in the administration of justice, reform of the probate courts to obviate the use of untrained judges, the disposition of the criminal insane, and the survival of the national guard under control of the states.⁶³ Hubbard asserted, "We have outgrown our old swaddling clothes and bandages," and declared "It is time we had sloughed them off." Yet, the Democrats chose to patch or accept rather than to reform basically or reconstruct boldly. The populace returned the Republicans to control.⁶⁴

NOTES—CHAPTER XXIV

¹ *Public Acts*, State of Conn., May, 1865, p. 101.

² *Journal*, Senate, May, 1865, p. 34; *Journal*, Senate, May, 1865, pp. 307-08.

³ *Public Acts*, May, 1865, pp. 23-25.

⁴ *Journal*, Senate, May, 1865, Governor's Message, p. 28; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," p. 152.

⁵ *Public Acts*, Conn., May, 1865, pp. 116-20; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 152-54.

⁶ Governor's Message in *Public Documents*, May, 1861, p. 65.

⁷ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 321-28.

⁸ *Public Acts*, 1872, pp. 10, 96.

- ⁹ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 178-92.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 166-70.
- ¹² Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 170-71.
- ¹³ Mary Ritter Beard, *The American Labor Movement* (New York, 1942), p. 27.
- ¹⁴ Henry E. Hoagland, "Humanitarianism," in John Commons *et al.*, *History of Labour in the United States*, 2 vols. (New York, 1918), Vol. I, p. 543; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," p. 214.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 210, 214-15; Beard, *The American Labor Movement*, p. 68; John B. Andrews, "Nationalism," in Commons *et al.*, *History of Labour*, Vol. II, p. 19.
- ¹⁶ *Public Acts*, Conn., 1867, p. 77.
- ¹⁷ Lane, *Political History of Connecticut*, p. 277.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 276.
- ¹⁹ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 237-38.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 234; Buckingham, *William A. Buckingham*, pp. 430-35.
- ²¹ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 241-47.
- ²² *Ibid.*, pp. 236-69.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 258-66.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 220-32, 257-68; Norton, "Connecticut Governors," in *Connecticut Magazine*, Vol. VIII, 1903-1904, pp. 117-20.
- ²⁵ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 233-35, 243, 394, 397-99, 400-01.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 398-400.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 434-38.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 232-33, 300-07, 353-54.
- ²⁹ *Public Acts*, Connecticut, May Session, 1872, p. 19; May Session, 1870, pp. 498-99.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 1866-68, p. 333.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, and 1871, pp. 594-95.
- ³² *Ibid.*, May Session, 1872, pp. 43-44.
- ³³ Norton, "Governors of Connecticut," *Connecticut Magazine*, Vol. VIII, 1903-1904, pp. 117-23; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 400-30.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 405-20; Report of the Joint Select Committee on the Canvass of Votes for the Governor, *Public Documents*, Conn., 1871.
- ³⁵ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," p. 440.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 440-41; *Public Acts*, Connecticut, 1871, p. 659; 1872, pp. 113-14; in Osborne, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. II, pp. 41-45.
- ³⁷ Efforts in 1848, 1849, 1855, and 1867 had failed for lack of the necessary majorities in the Assembly. Melbert B. Cary, *The Struggle for Constitutional Reform in Connecticut*, p. 14.
- ³⁸ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 449-50.
- ³⁹ Simeon E. Baldwin, *Considerations on Constitutional Reform in Connecticut, Submitted to the Members of the Legislature of 1873 and to the People* (New Haven, 1873), p. 5.
- ⁴⁰ Simeon E. Baldwin, *The Three Constitutions of Connecticut*, p. 240.
- ⁴¹ Frederick H. Jackson, *Simeon Eben Baldwin* (New York, 1955), pp. 58, 62-63.
- ⁴² Baldwin, *Constitutional Reform*,
- ⁴³ *Hartford Courant*, March 20, October 24, 27, 1873.
- ⁴⁴ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 440-42.
- ⁴⁵ *Public Acts*, Connecticut, 1873, p. 180.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 1874, p. 505; 1876, p. 356.
- ⁴⁸ *Hartford Courant*, July 10, 1873.
- ⁴⁹ Jackson, *Baldwin*, p. 61.
- ⁵⁰ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 440-43.

- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 445-50. Ingersoll's Republican opponent in 1873 was Henry P. Haven of New London; in 1874, it was Henry B. Harrison of New Haven; and in 1875, Henry C. Robinson of Hartford. See, Norton, "Governors of Connecticut," *Connecticut Magazine*, Vol. 8, 1903-1904, pp. 123-26.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 445-50.
- ⁵³ *Journal*, House, in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. II, p. 49.
- ⁵⁴ *Public Documents*, Connecticut, 1878, Governor's Message, p. 3.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁵⁶ *Public Acts*, 1877, p. 259; January Session, 1878, pp. 357-58; *Public Documents*, 1879, Vol. I, Governor's Message, p. 5.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 12 ff.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 25, 29-30.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-31.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Chapter XXV

The Aggregation of Capital, Banking and Insurance

POLITICAL MACHINERY, regardless of which party controlled it, was, in fact, the handmaiden of economic development, and was subordinated to the objective of creating a favorable climate for the corporate activities which were regarded as of greatest benefit to the state. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, the power of wealth was evident. Its power had been indicated especially by the operations of the financial institutions.

Banking

Banks had benefited from the shift from a war to a peace time economy, from the shortage of money, and from the cooperation of the Assembly in granting legal confirmation to banking practices which endorsed their philosophy and policy. Bank policy was not developed entirely as a free choice of bank directors: in part it reflected the pressure of depositors seeking high returns. The final policy, however, was a factor in creating periods in which less favorable economic situations prevailed. The banks, in turn, were caught in the web of general economic conditions. Banks joined with other corporations to insure that a favorable tax structure would be maintained. Independently, they sought to remove restrictions on interest rates and investments.

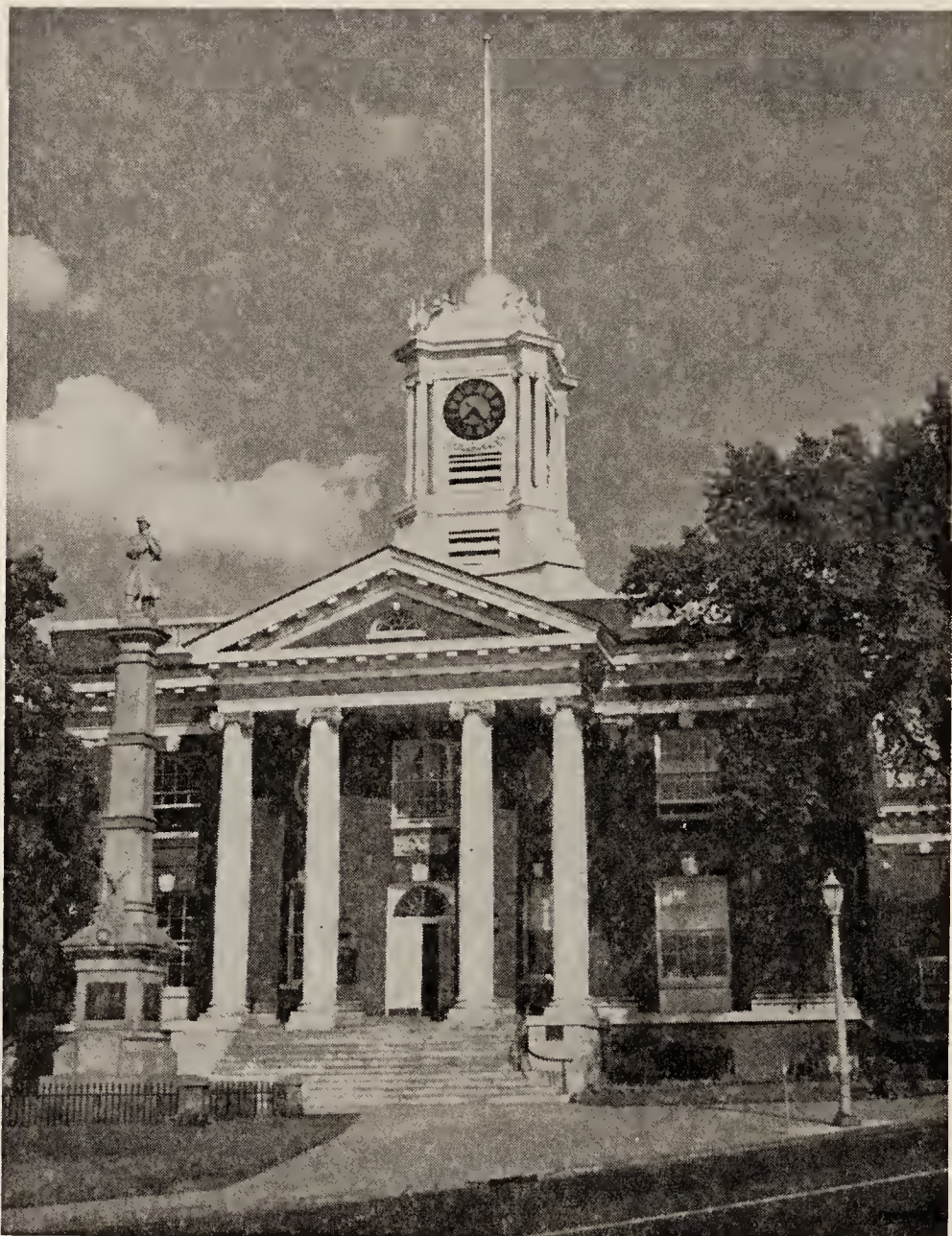
Banks in the small towns were attracted by the eight and ten per cent returns promised by the railroads on their bonds. Those looking for even greater profits were investing in Wall Street securities. The

banks contended that their choice of investments was necessitated by the demands of depositors for large returns.¹

The banks had contended, too, that credit should seek its own cost level, the need for credit requiring an increase in interest rates. When the rural legislators resisted the demands to change the 1866 laws² which limited interest to six per cent,³ it became customary to circumvent the law by requiring a bonus of from 45 to 60 dollars on each thousand loaned. It was estimated that by 1871 there were more than fifty million dollars loaned at more than the legal rate.⁴ Sanction had been secured from the Assembly in 1872 when it determined that the six per cent interest rate would prevail "when there is no agreement for a different rate." At this time, too, the severe punitive measures of the old usury law were eliminated.⁵

The increase in interest rates had combined with unexpected economic developments to becloud the optimistic outlook. The increased rates discouraged building, which, in turn, was reflected in the real estate market. Concurrently, an increase in insurance rates as a result of the Chicago fire caused a restlessness within the business community, which was intensified by losses suffered in the Boston fire the next year. While the general economy was recovering from these disasters, the textile industry was shocked by the failure of one of the large commission merchants, Stanfield, Wentworth, and Company, a house which handled many of the textile accounts. Further intimation that all was not well was indicated by the failure of three banks during the Spring and Summer of 1872, the E. S. Scranton of New Haven, the Middletown Savings, and the Hartford County Savings.⁷

Restlessness became panic in 1873 as New York banks, such as that of Jay Cooke, fell. When the crash involved Fiske and Hatch Company of New York and the Brooklyn Trust Company, many of Connecticut's small towns were directly concerned. Railroads were financing their expansion through bonds guaranteed by municipalities. Both Fiske and Hatch and Brooklyn Trust were large holders of the securities.⁸ Within the state, the very large Townsend Savings Bank of New Haven illustrates the practices which helped to produce the panic. Its real estate holdings in Philadelphia and loans amounting to twice the value of the property had presented a false picture of the bills receivable. An effort



(Courtesy "Meriden Record-Journal")

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to cover up through illegal investments sealed the fate of the institution. The assets of the bank continually declined throughout 1873 and 1874 until the bank closed in the latter year.⁹

The panic extended beyond the banking institutions. The number of bankruptcies in the state had been increasing since 1870 and rose from 48 in 1872 to 73 in 1873. The seriousness of the situation was indicated when the presumably impregnable Sprague Textile Mills closed their doors in October.¹⁰ The effects of the panic were every-

where evident. Prices fell and the decline in real estate values was reflected in the decline of the grand list. The state's income was reduced in 1874 by about \$50,000.¹¹ The business community recovered slowly, but, despite the signs of economic distress, it was reported that employment had not been seriously affected, and the production of the diversified industries maintained a relatively even pace. The public was admonished "that patient industry alone can satisfy the penalty past excesses are now exacting of our people."¹²

Protests had mounted to force, in 1873, several pieces of legislation intended to correct some of the "excesses" attributed to the savings banks. Banks were forbidden to invest in railroad stocks or bonds or in any one-name paper. Additional security for all commercial paper, equivalent to an absolute guarantee or endorsement of such paper, was required. The clause which permitted any rate of interest to which the bargainers would agree was eliminated, but the legal rate was raised from six to seven per cent. A restoration of penalty required violators to forfeit the value of any illegal premium involved.¹³ Investigation of the affairs of the Townsend Savings Bank had revealed its lack of wisdom in having almost ten per cent of its resources in Philadelphia. "If it is wise . . . to guard the investments of the rich, why is it not equally our duty to protect the hard earnings of the poor?" asked the Bank Commissioner.¹⁴ The legislature responded by requiring that real estate offered as security be appraised by two or more persons from the community where the loan was made and by forbidding savings banks or savings societies, having more than \$25,000 in deposits, to lend on personal security to any one person, company, or interest, more than three per cent of its deposits.¹⁵

Such restrictions did not curb the speculative spirit of the times. There was merit in the earlier contentions that a fixed interest rate would cause capital to flow to those areas which promised more attractive returns. Some took advantage of the fact that the law of 1867 forbidding investments in other states carried no penalty and, until penalties were imposed in 1874, loaned money on the flimsiest of security and with practically no knowledge of the character or the value of the property. The out-of-state loans to which the Bank Commissioner objected amounted in value to less than a million dollars as compared to 76

millions loaned within the state. However, investments of the Farmington Savings Bank constituted approximately half of these out-of-state loans. The Commissioner bitterly condemned those who disregarded law in search for large returns.¹⁶

In fact, demands of depositors for high dividends was a factor pressing the banks into questionable practices, and both directors and depositors shared in the responsibility. Savings banks in many instances had ceased to be the institutions for which they had originally been chartered and accepted deposits from individuals far in excess of the \$1,000 maximum prescribed by law. During periods of stress, as in the 1870's, when the opportunities for investment were comparatively limited, financiers tended to place their idle capital in the savings banks and draw the certain interest those institutions would presumably return. Banks, on the other hand, frequently sought to attract depositors by offering extraordinary dividends. Then it was found necessary to make the type of investment which promised to provide the necessary return. The situation was made more difficult by the decrease in the rate of interest on United States and municipal bonds. With their capacity to earn markedly lessened, there was a tendency for some banks to meet the promised dividends by using interest paid in advance and by cutting into their capital. The inevitable consequences of such practices to the bank are obvious. In addition, since the savings banks were repositories for most of the liquid funds in the state, such practices also affected the general financial structure of the state.¹⁷

During the depressed conditions, the banks did press for a reduction of taxes. When first established as benevolent institutions, they had been exempted from taxation. When new taxes were instituted in 1864 to reduce the war debt, savings banks were assessed at one fourth of one per cent of their deposits. This was subsequently raised to one half per cent, and, since the banks persisted in their commercial activities, there was merit in the contention that the levy was just. In these circumstances, however, the banks appeared to begin to resist the demands of the depositors for higher interest. Some reduced dividends, some passed one or more, and others suspended dividends for an indefinite time.¹⁸ By statute, semi-annual dividends could not be greater than the net income of the banks in the preceding six months in excess



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

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of the one-fourth of one per cent of this income which was reserved for contingencies.¹⁹ All dividends were suspended by law in 1878 and 1879.²⁰ The banks, it was said, were also attempting to reestablish their original purpose by refusing to allow depositors to increase their accounts to any amount and by forcing depositors even to reduce their aggregate deposits. In the light of this reported procedure and intent, taxes on savings banks were reduced to one fourth of one per cent.²¹

The gloom which had settled over the state after the crisis of 1873

had been replaced by confidence by 1879. There had been an increase in deposits in the savings banks in 1879 for the first time in three years.²² In general, deposits barely held their own in the five years preceding January, 1880. In the next five years, however, they rose by twenty per cent.²³ The mandatory reserve from earnings before dividends were declared was reduced to one-eighth of one per cent of the bank's deposits.²⁴ Everyone was confident that the worst had passed. Labor was in greater demand, wages were higher, and the Governor reported enthusiastically that "stagnation has given way to enterprise, dullness has been succeeded by activity."²⁵

To gain full advantage of the prosperity of the eighties, an effort was made to adjust the tax structure to the demands of wealth and industry. Savings banks were least affected by the revisions, however. They could not object seriously to the one fourth of one per cent levy upon their deposits, which they had been paying since 1878. The proportion contributed by the savings banks to the state's receipts fluctuated less in the last period of the century than the amounts paid by other industries. Even during the lowest point of the Panic of 1893, there was not an inordinate run on the banks. The number of depositors with accounts of less than \$2000 decreased by 172, while the well-to-do added to the total deposits and increased the total number of depositors by 1,375. The savings banks were the first to feel the effects of the revival of business in 1894. Savings banks paid approximately 10 per cent of the state's receipts in 1879, 7.3 per cent in 1885, and between 10 and 15 per cent for the remainder of the century.²⁶

The banks, as well as the insurance companies, were greatly interested in one contention presented to the Commission on Tax Revision, however. It was contended that laws which taxed the returns from investments in property which was itself taxed constituted double taxation. The commission, however, pointed out that legal opinion was divided as to the merits of such claims of double taxation and would go no further than to suggest that there should be no taxation on government bonds or on real estate bearing local taxes.²⁷ The Governor, however, more sensitive to the wishes of the financial interests, spoke strongly for the elimination of the double tax.²⁸

The pressure to return to a tax structure based entirely on prop-

erty persisted. There is no reason, said Governor George P. McLean in 1900, "why the moneyed corporations of the state should not be taxed directly by the state," instead of through their stockholders, and the money returned to the towns where the owners resided. The problem of the "back towns," said the Governor, was a grave one, and the state needed to find a way to aid the communities in bearing the expense of their schools and of caring for their poor, while preserving local autonomy. Since railroads paid their tax directly to the state and manufactories were taxed locally on their property, the shares of both were exempted. The inequitability which prevailed in taxes on real estate was a central problem in dependence upon this tax base. The Governor charged that for years the legislatures, in their anxiety to tax credit and money at interest, had "driven the spear of double taxation safely by the intended victim to the very heart of the suffering borrower."³² As the Governor pressed for tax reform, he brought up issues which continue important and unsolved in contemporary Connecticut.

Notwithstanding panics and cries of social responsibility, financial institutions remained impatient of attempts to control their quests for profits. They circumvented the law against loans on mortgages outside the state and advanced money on endorsed notes.³³ The lure of profits from western lands, in particular, continued to attract Connecticut investors. The state was deluged by foreign mortgage and investment companies until 1887, when they were placed under the supervision of the state Bank Commissioner. In 1890, the investments of these companies amounted to 16 millions. By 1895, the number of the companies had diminished from a high of 42 to 12. This reduction was the result, in part, of poor management and insufficient capitalization, and, in part, of the declining price of cotton, wheat, and silver, which reduced the security upon which many marginal loans had been made.³⁴

The pressure for dividends continued. Savings banks assumed the functions of banks of discount and a large part of their portfolio came to consist of signed commercial paper. There is, perhaps, nothing more indicative of the trend in investments by Connecticut banks than the rise in stock and bond holdings. The nearly 104 millions invested in stocks and bonds in 1900 constituted more than 53 per cent of their total assets, as compared to the approximately 17 per cent of this type of investment

in 1870. Real estate still made up a significant amount of investments, but constituted only 33 per cent of the total in 1900 as compared to 55 per cent in 1870. These changes, coupled with the negligible investments in government bonds of \$1,268,000, emphasized the desire for higher profits. To meet the demands for dividends, banks not only invested in securities bearing higher interest, but frequently intruded upon their surpluses beyond what was considered the margin of safety.

Hesitantly, uncertain of its effectiveness, legislation was introduced toward the end of the nineteenth century in an attempt to bring savings institutions in line with the rising demands for public institutions to assume a greater social responsibility. Dividends were limited by law in 1897 to four per cent a year, and a Judge of the Superior Court, on petition of the Bank Commissioner, was authorized to issue an injunction restraining savings banks from paying dividends when, in the court's judgment, it would imperil depositors.³⁶ Savings banks were not allowed to place more than 20 per cent of their total investments in stocks and bonds, nor more than 20 per cent in endorsed notes.³⁷

Insurance

The insurance industry, at the end of the postwar period, was ready to take advantage of its fortuitous position. It had survived its tempestuous beginnings in which the industry had been characterized by price cutting, careless divisions of profits, and blind devotion to premiums. It had recovered from the uncertainties of the Civil War and from the restlessness of reconstruction. New opportunities for profits appeared in the growth of the West, in an unprecedented industrial expansion, and in the attending urban development. The future was so bright that greater success was to result from apparent disaster.³⁸

The disasters of the early seventies were turned into assets by the insurance companies. The companies were stunned by the first news of the Chicago holocaust in 1870. Policy holders had been assured by representatives on the spot that they would be paid in full, and cold and courageous efficiency enabled the companies to fulfill this promise. The fire itself, which had destroyed the records of many policy holders, enabled the companies to delay payments until resources were available



(Courtesy Hartford Chamber of Commerce)

HARTFORD—MUNICIPAL BUILDING AT RIGHT,
TRAVELERS IN BACKGROUND

to meet them. As funds became available, company records were processed. The Aetna, the Phoenix, and the Hartford Mutual companies all followed the same procedures. To raise funds, capital was immediately cut in half and restored by new subscriptions. The rates were increased from one per cent to one and three-fourths per cent. New business flowed in at an unprecedented rate. Seven hundred thousand in new premiums was contracted with Aetna within 20 days after the fire.

Within six months, these revenues were sufficient to pay for the Chicago losses. The losses had been huge, but the fire had been an object lesson in the value of insurance, in the desirability of cooperation among the insurance companies, and the importance of maintaining uniform rates. When the companies were hit by the Boston fire the next year, they demonstrated their maturity as business organizations and promptly paid the \$2,500,000 losses. The companies had learned the necessity of large assets, and the need of dispersing their risks. They assumed privileges commensurate with their strength.

The insurance industry had, however, aroused the ire of the Connecticut populace. The business community had protested vigorously at the increase in rates and had charged that the insurance companies were shifting the burden of the fires to their shoulders. It was claimed, with a great deal of accuracy, that in previous years, the companies had distributed huge profits to their stockholders and in times of stress went bankrupt or met their obligations through an increase in rates.⁴⁰ Also, life insurance companies had a reputation for tax evasion. Consistently, both during and after the war, the companies had forced the state to resort to law suits to collect back taxes. The last of these was settled in 1871 with the state receiving a judgment of \$241,000. When investigation revealed that the companies had enjoyed an exemption on their premium note business, the Democratic press voiced its protest. The *Times*, by comparing the tax load of the insurance companies with that of the railroads, banks, and farmers, bared the selfishness of the insurance companies and appealed for support of legislation which would levy a tax on the premium notes.⁴¹ The belief prevailed, too, that the companies had taken advantage of a Connecticut law of 1867 to conceal their wealth. Inasmuch as the companies were not required to swear to the authenticity of their reports they had provided flagrantly inaccurate ones. It was later revealed that they had omitted all but business not done on the mutual plan; all items of interest on premium notes, bonds, and mortgages; and, in Connecticut, had reported all their securities at par value, while, in New York, they had reported them at market value.⁴²

In bringing the insurance companies under the control of the state, the first step was the requirement, contained in a general insurance

law passed in 1871, that officials of the companies should verify the authenticity of the companies' reports. The Insurance Commissioner, who had been dependent on the fees collected by his office for his compensation, was made independent of the companies by the provision



BRIDGEPORT

(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

that his salary would be paid by the state.⁴³ The Commissioner was permitted to request information necessary to determine the solvency of the companies. The established controls did not portend a circumscription of the activities of insurance companies and they had sufficient power to block an attempt to levy a tax on premium notes. The greatest threat was the appointment of a special legislative committee to investigate the reports to the Insurance Commissioner.⁴⁴

Damaging evidence was unearthed of the business and political

activities of the insurance companies. The Hartford companies conducted their business on both mutual and regular plans. They held that mutual funds, owned by their depositors, should be exempt from taxation. It was revealed, however, that in their operations the companies made no distinction between the two funds and that the mutual funds were controlled entirely by the directors acting for the stock holders. In addition, the committee provided positive evidence that the companies had deliberately sought to conceal their wealth.⁴⁵

Apparently in anticipation of the results of the investigation, the insurance interests marshalled all their resources to return in 1872 a Senate favorable to their cause. It was reported by the strictly Republican *Norwich Bulletin* that the insurance companies would spend \$50,000 to achieve their objective. The particular target of their effort was Charles M. Pond, the Democratic nominee for Senator from Hartford, who, as state Treasurer, had pushed the tax suit against Connecticut Mutual. Despite the concentrated efforts of the insurance group, Pond was defeated by only three votes and the election of Charles J. Cole, his opponent, was immediately contested. The investigation which followed resulted in the unseating of Cole and elicited damaging proof of the insurance companies' efforts to determine the election and to influence the course of the subsequent investigation. When the insurance companies then challenged the integrity of the investigating committee, they contributed further to the ill feeling which was felt by some of the members of the General Assembly.⁴⁶

The tax bill offered in this session was hotly contested. The proposal for taxing the insurance companies was reported unfavorably by the Finance Committee. The Democratic Lieutenant Governor broke a tie vote on the question of acceptance of the committee's report. The bill was passed and on the next day approved by the House. A rate of one half of one per cent was fixed on all premium notes held by mutual companies and on the market value of all their assets, not including the amount of taxable bonds which they held which were deductible from their assets.⁴⁷ The tax fight emphasized that insurance companies placed profit before social responsibility and pointed to the necessity of the state's taking a firmer hand in the control of the practices in this industry.

A degree of control was achieved through the leadership of John W. Stedman, the crusading editor of the *Norwich Advertiser*. In response to public demand, Governor Charles R. Ingersoll appointed Stedman Commissioner of Insurance. The office had been established in 1865, but those who preceded Stedman in the office seem to have defaulted in their responsibilities. The first Commissioner, Benjamin Noyes, was also President of the American Mutual Insurance Company of New Haven and a notorious speculator. In spite of friendship with politicians in high place, he eventually went to prison for fraud practiced as head of his company. The second Commissioner, Dr. Miller, was also actively engaged in insurance and used his office to assist the industry in its attempt to avoid taxes on premium notes.⁴⁸ In contrast, Stedman entered into his new duties, as he declared, "without fear or favor," and he pursued his examination of the management and investments of the companies with a singleness of purpose. "Scant and shabby" reports were promptly returned to be completed in accordance with the law.⁴⁹ In his crusade against special privilege, Stedman had the support of Governor Ingersoll, who warned the Assembly that "managers of such vast sums of money" are always subject to temptation and the trust invested in them should be protected by the law.⁵⁰

The insurance laws of the state were literally rewritten during Stedman's administration. The Commissioner was empowered to petition the courts to order companies to cease operations if their assets were less than three-fourths of their liabilities.⁵¹ Insurance companies could be consolidated only with permission of a commission consisting of the state commissioner and commissioners of two other states.⁵² Loans made by a company after 1876 required the unanimous consent of the executive committee of the company or the approval of a majority of its board of directors. They were to be secured by unencumbered real estate having a market value of at least double the amount loaned or by stocks and bonds with a market value of at least 25 per cent in excess of the loan.⁵³ To prevent the all too prevalent practice of paying dividends out of capital stock, it was provided, in 1877, that they could be paid only if assets exceeded the amount of capital stock and all liabilities.⁵⁴ False advertising by insurance companies was made punishable by a \$500 fine for a first offense and a \$1,000 for a second.⁵⁵ Other in-

fractions were punishable by fines ranging from \$500 to \$10,000 and by prison terms, and the commissioner was given sweeping power to investigate life insurance companies at any time.

In 1877, a commission was appointed to inquire into the working of the statutes relative to insurance.⁵⁶ The report was buried in the legislative committee to which it was referred. Stedman commented that the committee "was so busy with its own work that it did not have time to consider it [the report] and passed it on to the next session."⁵⁷ The special commission apparently chose to direct its efforts toward the activities of the Continental Life Insurance Company and the Charter Oak Company which were already under attack by Stedman. Although it does not appear that recommendations were formally submitted to the Assembly as a whole in 1879, there was passed "An Act Relating to Insurance Companies," which remains as something of a testimonial to Stedman's stewardship, inasmuch as it included the legislation passed under his direction.⁵⁹

The Insurance Commissioner sought to apply his powers to correct existing irregularities. Stedman appealed emotionally to the Assembly when the Court of Probate of the District of New Haven denied his petition that an order to cease operations be issued to the American National Life and Trust Company, which had absorbed the assets of the American Mutual Life Insurance Company. For the Assembly, Stedman detailed transactions of the company which should have served as a rebuke to the court. Much of the so-called "guaranteed capital" of the company was characterized as "rubbish which would not, in the pockets of the subscribers, have produced one cent of income. . . ." He submitted countless allegations including the charge that the company had presented, as assets, bonds without market value, stock without worth, and real estate which was grossly over valued. Stedman concluded, "to my mind there is no crime against property known among men that does not shrink into trifling compared with that of despoiling widows and orphans through a criminal or reckless squandering of trust-funds of life insurance companies. . . . Should not the sword of justice fall swift upon any one of them when it threatens to imperil the interests and hopes of the thousands who have trusted in it, and who are helpless to aid themselves?"⁶⁰ This was the most brazen business

scandal in the history of the state, and Benjamin Noyes, its President and a former Insurance Commissioner, was indicted and imprisoned.⁶¹

The Charter Oak and the Continental Insurance companies were, also, subjected to Stedman's searching criticism. The Charter Oak was



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saved temporarily by going into receivership and later by extensive borrowing. The affairs of Continental Life were aired by the Special Commission in 1878 and its allegations were admitted to be substantially true by the insurance committee. Yet, with the facts before them, the Assembly refused to take action. Secure in its belief in its immunity, the company continued operation until 1887, when a federal judge finally granted a petition to order the company to cease operation.

Afterwards, the company lingered in receivership for the rest of the century.⁶²

As Stedman acted out his role as public defender and as legislation was enacted to strengthen his powers, the importance of the Commissioner in the machinery of government increased. The term of the office was changed from one to three years in 1877 and three years later to four.⁶³ When his term expired in 1880, Stedman recalled whimsically "the ancient pastoral system of shepherds, sheep, dogs, and wolves, and the fabled diplomacy of the wolves when with assurances of their distinguished consideration they attempted to form a treaty of peace with the shepherds, the first article of which was that they should kill their dogs."⁶⁴ Stedman suggested that his degree of success in executing his duties was of greatest importance to himself. His work was significant as well to private individuals, to the body politic, and to the insurance companies from which he demanded a modicum of responsibility in an age of easy morality.

Under the aegis of state supervision, the insurance industry, in the years from 1875 to 1900, became relatively stabilized. It was a period of consolidation, elimination, and expansion. The marginal and the corrupt companies were absorbed or forced out of business. The number of Connecticut companies writing life policies had been reduced during the period from ten to six.⁶⁵ During the same period, the companies from outside the state doing business in Connecticut had increased from 16 to 22. The number of Connecticut stock companies writing fire insurance in Connecticut had been reduced from 13 in 1875 to seven in 1900.⁶⁶ By 1900, the insurance companies had assumed the characteristics of old established businesses. The average age of the six life companies was 43 and that of the fire companies 55. A measure of the tendency toward consolidation is also suggested by the reduction of the number of mutual fire insurance companies from seventeen to twelve. Despite the concentration of business in fewer companies, the business of the companies, by any standard of comparison, expanded many fold. The admitted assets of the Connecticut life companies, for example, increased from 98 in 1875 to 164 million in 1900, while that of the fire insurance companies increased more than two and one-half times, from 19 to 49 million.⁶⁷ This increase was true even though the

fire insurance companies had survived especially heavy losses in 1889 and had operated at a deficit of \$800,000 in the year of the panic of 1893.⁶⁸

The nature of the assets of the insurance companies was shifting from a concentration of real estate to an increasing percentage of investments in stocks and bonds. In 1878 investments of life companies in real estate approached twenty per cent of their total assets. At this time the Insurance Commissioner believed that real property still constituted a superior investment. In 1880, it was learned upon investigation that the companies overvalued their real property in their returns. Real estate values were, however, approaching the market prices existing before the panic of 1873. It was suggested that the companies sell their real estate and reinvest their funds.⁶⁹ The percentage of assets engaged in real estate investments had been reduced to 15 by 1885, when it was implied that such investment might be prevented by law. The Commissioner in that year pointed out that real estate was not an asset which could be immediately converted to meet the demands upon the company.⁷⁰ Loans could be made on unencumbered real estate only up to 50 per cent of its market value. The market value of stocks and bonds was required to exceed the amount of the loan by only 25 per cent.⁷¹ Although prohibitive legislation was not passed in regard to real estate investments, the lower margin required on stocks and bonds must have attracted capital. Only 13 per cent of the total assets of the Connecticut insurance companies had been reported to be in stocks and bonds in 1875. This had risen to 24 per cent in 1890, and by the end of the century, to 34 per cent of the 164 million assets.

Reaction to the companies became more favorable. The commission appointed in 1880 "to inquire into the conditions and workings of the tax laws of the state" stated boldly that "a State so dependent upon corporations, as is ours, for its revenue, could not defend for a moment its existing taxes upon franchises."⁷² It was held that taxes on franchises had been originally levied for the privilege of transacting business, but that, in practice, the tax was determined not by the nature of the activity, but by its extent and that the amount assessed varied in relation to the amount of property held. It was recognized that real and personal property was taxed unevenly and the commission called for a more

equitable rate. In applying these general observations to specific industries, the commission made a special appeal on behalf of the mutual insurance companies. These, it was held, were placed at a serious disadvantage by Connecticut's taxes since few of the other states taxed insurance companies at all.

The insurance companies were the chief beneficiaries of action taken. Through a complicated tax scheme passed in 1881 and subsequent tax benefits, they were able to reduce the amount of the taxes they paid the state to \$217,000 in 1874 as compared to \$375,000 paid five years previously.⁷⁴ This reduction was made despite the fact that during the same period their "admitted assets" increased by 37 per cent to a value of 26 million.⁷⁵ The insurance companies had contributed 25 per cent of the state's receipts in 1879. In 1885, they contributed only eight per cent and at the end of the century they were contributing about 10 per cent of the state's receipts.⁷⁶

The executive branch, too, became solicitous of the insurance companies. In 1887, Governor Phineas C. Lounsbury asked the Assembly to observe "the vast interests which our insurance laws affect, and in large degree control" to realize the great responsibility of the state. He insisted that "there is little doubt that our insurance companies as a rule are managed by upright and capable men. There is no doubt that all new legislation touching these companies should be begun with caution and adopted only after the most patient and thorough consideration."⁷⁷

The favorable attitude extended beyond the office of the Governor and the halls of the legislature. The courts of the state, all during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, apparently had been favorably disposed toward the insurance companies. Events proved that the allegations of John Stedman against the American National Life and Trust Company were correct, yet, the Probate Court of New Haven had refused to grant an injunction to force the corruption-ridden company to discontinue business. The weight of public opinion had been necessary to override the opinion.⁷⁸ The Continental Life had escaped unscathed until the Insurance Commissioner, Orasmus R. Fyler, had taken his petition before a judge whom he joyously reported to have "a clear conception of his duties, and a due regard for the interest of policy

holders, in not permitting the remaining assets of the company to be wasted in a fruitless contest, which in the end must have resulted in granting the petition." In explaining why the company, which he described as "a disgrace to the insurance interests, and to the state which gave it birth," should have been permitted to continue operation so long, he observed that "the experiences of commissioners in the past, in bringing their petitions to the Court for the appointment of receivers, have not been such as to encourage experiments in that direction."⁷⁹

NOTES—CHAPTER XXV

- ¹ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 324-27; Public Documents, 1875, Report of the Bank Commissioner, p. xx.
- ² General Statutes of Connecticut, 1866, p. 732.
- ³ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 324-25.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 326-27.
- ⁵ Public Acts, 1872, p. 10.
- ⁷ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 329-31.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 324-25.
- ⁹ Public Documents, 1875, Report of the Bank Commissioner, pp. v-x.
- ¹⁰ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," p. 324.
- ¹¹ Public Documents, 1875, Governor's Message, pp. 1-5.
- ¹² *Ibid.*
- ¹³ General Statutes of Connecticut, pp. 731-33; Public Acts, 1873, pp. 142, 145-46, 164-65. In 1875, the banks succeeded in pushing through the legislature a provision recognizing the discount principle on loans, which was tantamount to an increase in rates, Public Acts, 1875, p. 3; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," p. 329.
- ¹⁴ Public Documents, 1875, Report of the Bank Commissioner, pp. v-x.
- ¹⁵ Public Acts, 1875, pp. 67-68.
- ¹⁶ Public Documents, 1875, Report of the Bank Commissioner, p. xi; *ibid.*, 1876, pp. xii-xv.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1875, p. xv; 1876, pp. vi-lx; 1877, pp. v-viii; Vol. I, 1879, pp. ix, 13.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- ¹⁹ Public Acts, 1877, p. 197.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1878, p. 262; 1879, p. 375.
- ²¹ Public Documents, 1879, Vol. I, Report of the Bank Commissioner, p. 13; Public Acts, 1878, p. 301.
- ²² Public Documents, 1880, Vol. I, Report of the Bank Commissioner.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 1890, Vol. I, p. 258.
- ²⁴ Public Acts, 1890, p. 9.
- ²⁵ Public Documents, 1880, Vol. I, Report of the Bank Commissioner, pp. 80-82.
- ²⁶ Public Documents, 1881, Vol. I, Report of the Special Commission on Revision of the Tax Laws, pp. 3-12; *ibid.*, 1880-1900, Treasurer's Reports; *ibid.*, 1895, Vol. I, Report of the Bank Commissioner, pp. 9-12.
- ²⁷ Public Documents, 1881, Vol. I, Report of the Special Commission on Revision of the Tax Laws, pp. 3-12.
- ²⁸ Public Documents, 1881, Vol. I, Governor's Message, p. 13.

- ³² Public Documents, 1900, Vol. I, Governor's Message, pp. 10-13.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, 1881, Vol. I, Report of the Bank Commissioner, p. 4.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1897, Governor's Message, p. 7; 1888, 1890, Bank Commissioner's Reports; 1895, pp. 31-37; Public Acts, 1887, pp. 653, 754.
- ³⁶ Public Documents, 1897, Vol. I, Bank Commissioner's Report; Public Acts, 1887, pp. 742, 845.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1897, p. 921.
- ³⁸ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 338-47.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁴¹ Hartford *Times*, July 5, 1871; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 453-55.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 256-59.
- ⁴³ General Statutes of Connecticut, 1866, Title 7, Chapter 7, section 383, p. 168; Public Acts, 1871, pp. 723-34.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁵ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 356-59; Public Documents, Report of the Insurance Commissioner.
- ⁴⁶ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 356-59.
- ⁴⁷ Journal, Senate, Public Acts, 1872, p. 83.
- ⁴⁸ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 360-62.
- ⁴⁹ Public Documents, 1875, Report of the Insurance Commissioner, Part 2, p. 3.
- ⁵⁰ Public Documents, 1876, Governor's Message, p. 14.
- ⁵¹ Public Acts, 1876, pp. 120-21.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 121.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 1877, p. 251.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 1878, pp. 291-92.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1877, pp. 198-99.
- ⁵⁷ Public Documents, 1878, Report of the Insurance Commissioner, Part I, p. 428.
- ⁵⁹ Public Acts, 1879, p. 396; 1880, p. 28.
- ⁶⁰ Public Documents, 1875, Special Report of the Insurance Commissioner on the Affairs of the American National Life and Trust Company of New Haven, pp. 1-21.
- ⁶¹ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 360-61.
- ⁶² Public Documents, 1888, Report of the Insurance Commissioner, Part 2, pp. xiii-xxvii.
- ⁶³ Public Acts, 1877, pp. 207-208, 230.
- ⁶⁴ Public Documents, 1890, Report of the Insurance Commissioner, Part 2, pp. 189-90.
- ⁶⁵ The Hartford Accident Insurance Company was absorbed by the Travelers, November 27, 1876, as was the Railways Passenger Assurance, September 10, 1878. The Continental Life and the Charter Oak were forced into the hands of receivers. Public Documents, 1875-1900, Reports of the Insurance Commissioners, *passim*.
- ⁶⁶ An injunction was issued in November, 1881, against the Atlas of Hartford, ordering it to cease operation. The Norwalk and the Meriden ceased operation in the early 1890's. The city of New Haven was reinsured by Security of the same city in 1876 and the Fairfield of South Norwalk by Niagara of New York in October 1880. The Peoples of Middletown was unique in that it discontinued operations in 1890 while doing a profitable business and with a surplus of \$100,000. *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁸ Report of the Insurance Commissioner, Part 1, p. xxvii; 1894, Vol. II, Report of the Insurance Commissioner, Part 1, p. ix; 1900, Report of the Insurance Commissioner, Part 2, p. x.

- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 1878, Report of the Insurance Commissioner, Part 2, p. 179; 1880, Vol. II, Report of the Insurance Commissioner, Part 2, p. 183; Public Acts, 1878, p. 121.
- ⁷⁰ Public Documents, 1885, Vol. II, Report of the Insurance Commissioner, Part 2, p. viii.
- ⁷¹ Public Acts, 1876, p. 121.
- ⁷³ Public Documents, 1881, Vol. I, Report of the Special Commissioner on the Revision of the Tax Laws, pp. 3-5.
- ⁷⁴ Public Acts, 1881, pp. 14, 57, 83, 242; Public Documents, 1880, Vol. I, Report of the Treasurer, p. 23; 1885, Vol. I, p. 19.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁶ Public Documents, 1880-1900, Reports of the Treasurer.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 1887, Governor's Message, p. 9.
- ⁷⁸ Public Documents, 1875, Special Report of the Insurance Commissioner of Connecticut on the Affairs of the American National Life and Trust Company of New Haven, pp. 1-21; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 360-61.
- ⁷⁹ Public Documents, 1888, Vol. II, Report of the Insurance Commissioner, p. xxiv.

Chapter XXVI

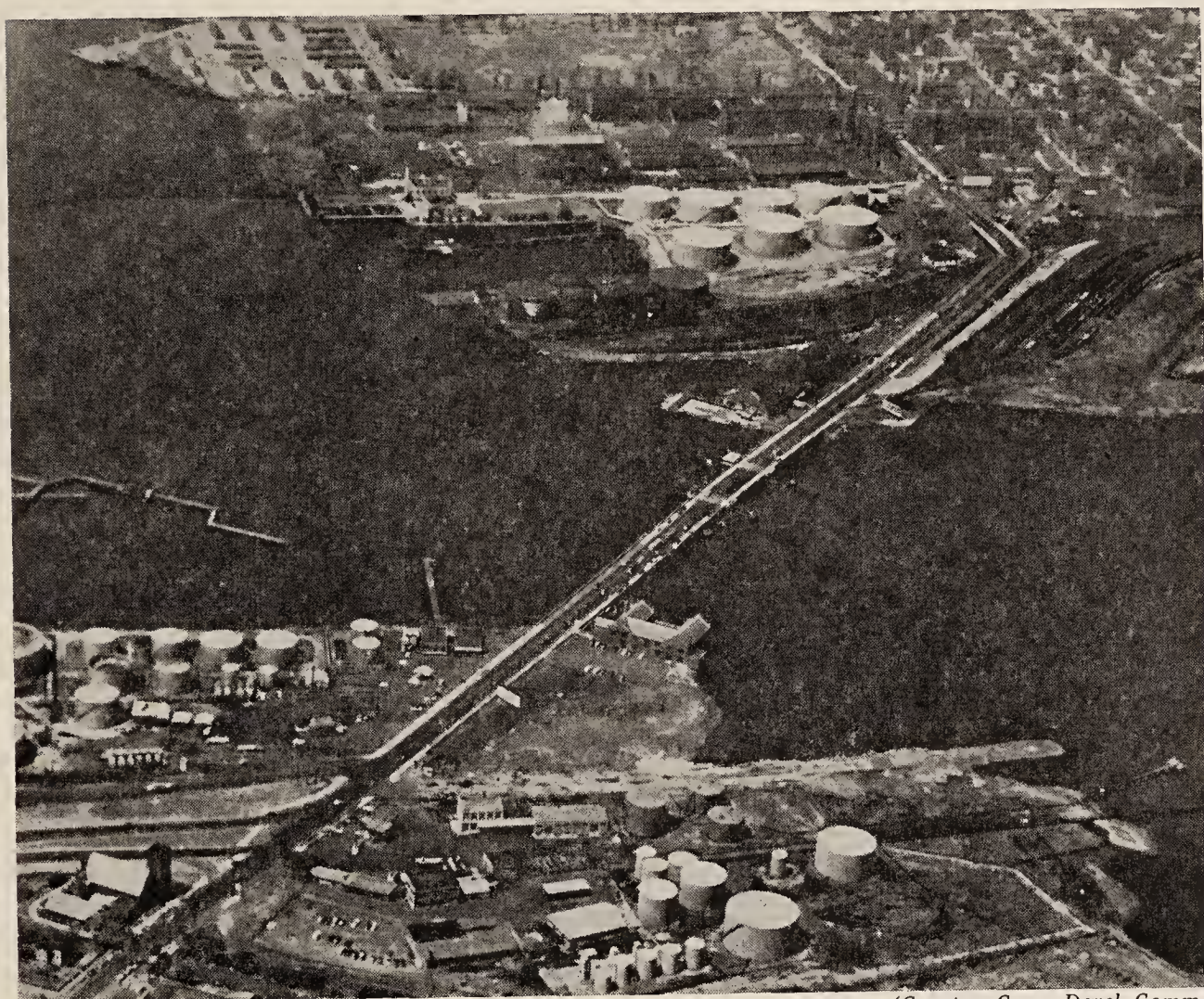
The Power of Wealth and Industry, Railroads and Industry

IN THE FIRST period of railroad construction in Connecticut, a number of small companies had built adjoining lines which were operated under separate management.¹ This was the basis for a railroad system in Connecticut, and, imperfect though it was, these independent companies provided the railroad service for Connecticut until the Civil War was almost ended.²

A step toward the consolidation of these companies was taken in 1864, when the Boston, Hartford, and Erie assumed the direction of the lines which entered the state from Providence and Boston and proceeded to Waterbury by way of Willimantic and Hartford and of certain connecting lines.³ The company also formed an alliance with the Erie Railroad in the West by exchanging \$5,000,000 of its bonds for \$4,000,000 of Erie acceptances which it immediately turned into cash. In this operation the company illustrated the speculation which was rampant in the years following the war and which typified the nature of its own operations. The company's managers were among the most reckless and plundering railroad pirates of the age. After the company went into bankruptcy in 1870, an investigating committee learned that only 40 miles of track had been laid in three years, yet \$28,000,000 in liquid assets had disappeared in this time. The security for this sum was 250,000 shares of stock, several leases upon which the rent had not been paid, and a railroad which was half-completed and in poor repair and which earned \$175,000. With the treasury depleted after months of litigation, the operation of the main line was returned to its original

bond holders.⁴ This attempt at amalgamation failed, but, in the 1870's, the trend toward combination of the various lines was evident.

All lines soon fell under the managerial direction of one or the other of two major systems, the New York, New Haven, and Hartford



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

NEW HAVEN—PORT AREA

or the New York and New England. Efforts of the New York and New Haven and of the New Haven and Hartford to consolidate under the laws of the state had been delayed by the effective lobbying of their opponents, the fear of monopoly, and the opposition of rural assemblymen. The railroads accomplished by agreement that which had been denied by the Assembly. In August, 1870, they took the first steps toward unification, when it was arranged that the stock of both companies would be jointly held, the roads placed under a single manage-

ment, and the net earnings split with 57 percent going to the New York and New Haven and 43 percent to the Hartford and New Haven. The Shore Line was added to the system almost immediately. When the consolidation was formalized by the Assembly in August, 1872, the system owned a double track railroad from Springfield to Williamsburg on the Hudson, trackage rights into New York City, and branch lines from Berlin to New Britain and from New Britain to Middletown. W. D. Bishop was on the board of directors of the Housatonic and Naugatuck railroads, and his son was president of the latter.⁵ Another step in the consolidation process came three years later when the management of the defunct Boston and Hartford was taken over by the New York and New England road in 1875.⁶ In 1883, consolidation received the formal sanction of the General Assembly through a statute outlining the procedures to be followed in the forming of such combinations.⁷

The opponents of consolidation could not prevent it, and their efforts to regulate some of the practices which had come to be identified with railroad monopolies appear to have been equally futile. The Assembly was under tremendous pressure in regard to the question of railroad consolidation. It was alleged that for one session of the legislature, the New York and New Haven employed 20 lobbyists and their opponents, including rival lines, employed 14.⁸ "Champagne suppers, railroad passes, free excursions, and outright bribery became the accepted instruments of policy."⁹ Some with interest in the railroad blatantly assumed positions in the Assembly as representatives of the people and acted for the special interests of their companies. Too often, that which could not be achieved through persuasion could be bought by lining the pockets of the legislators.¹⁰ "It must be a pleasant thing," suggested a critic of the New Haven, "to own a legislature and obtain from it for the asking any and all kinds of powers for this, that, or the other thing."¹¹ The reports of the Railroad Commissioners reveal much too clearly that for the most part the legislators acted in harmony with the wishes of the railroads.¹² When other action was ultimately taken, as by the amendment forbidding town aid to railroads, it generally came after the damage had been done.

When it became apparent that private capital was insufficient for the required expansion, the railroads turned to the towns along pro-

posed routes for financial assistance. It was comparatively easy to control a town meeting sufficiently to assure that the town would subscribe the necessary bonds. If a proposal failed at one meeting, successive meetings were called until a favorable vote was received. Hartford voted \$250,000 of the \$350,000 needed by the Connecticut Western. The towns along the projected Airline route from Willimantic to New Haven contributed approximately \$6,000,000 and all that the railroad could show for it was an unfinished road, interest due on a bonded debt of \$8,000,000, and four years of arrears in taxes.¹⁴ Even the towns could not supply capital sufficient for the needed construction and the speculative desires of the stock manipulators. In 1877, not one of the railroads which had incorporated after the system of town aid was adopted had earned an interest on their indebtedness and most of them were in default of their taxes. Foreclosure proceedings had been begun against at least two.¹⁵ The mishandling of funds and the gross misrepresentation of facts by the railroads aroused the ire of the opponents of the railroads. They were successful, in 1875, in pushing through an amendment to the constitution to prohibit any municipality from ever subscribing to the capital stock of railroads and from extending credit in any form for railroad construction. The timorous nature of the Assembly in railroad matters is revealed nowhere more clearly than by the fact that this matter was handled by amendment, which passed the issue on to the public for decision. The amendment was confirmed in 1877.¹⁶ The public till had been closed to the unscrupulous and the dishonest, but the towns were already saddled with a public debt. A measure of relief was provided when, in 1883, the state agreed to fund the debt for the towns for 20 years. When authorized by a vote at a town meeting, the treasurer of the state would issue state bonds in the amount of the indebtedness and accept as security municipal bonds bearing a rate of interest in excess of the state bonds.¹⁷

Many of the ills of the railroads, especially of those begun after the Civil War, were traceable to the practice of issuing stock without receiving requisite payments in cash. The issuance of watered stock was an accepted practice in the wildly speculative days immediately after the war. The pattern was for a company to pay for rolling stock repairs out of current earnings, regard this as capital improvement, and to

issue stock to cover this. Sometimes some payment was required on the share issued to raise additional capital, but more often there was no cash advance. In such instances, financial papers held that the issue "was almost always for the purpose of covering up something or deceiving



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

BARKHAMSTED—BELL PORTABLE SAW MILL AS THE VALLEY WAS BEING CLEARED FOR THE BARKHAMSTED RESERVOIR

the public." The state law prior to 1878 was lax on the subject. Directors of a railroad could by a two-thirds vote increase the capital as they wished with no limit on the amount or the purpose. Inasmuch as most of the stock was held by a few persons, it was not difficult to secure authorization for new issues. As a kind of absolution for all Connecticut investors, the Commissioner indicated that he had no fear of the situation as long as the railroads were controlled by Connecticut men.¹⁹ In

1878, however, 65 percent of the dividend paying stock was owned outside the state²⁰ and investments by Connecticut residents did not increase in proportion until toward the end of the century. This circumstance may be relevant to the willingness of the state to pass the restrictive legislation embodied in the law of 1878. This denied the railroads the privilege of increasing their capital stock without special permission of the legislature based upon an investigation by the commissioner.²¹ The securing of permission may have been related to the possession of influence in the Assembly. It is to be noted that an application of the Housatonic for an increase of \$600,000 was denied at the time the New Haven was straining to gain control of the line.²² Nevertheless, the fact remains that the state was slowly, perhaps reluctantly, discarding laissez-faire philosophy and was beginning to regard the railroads as public carriers which should assume their responsibilities to the public.

Customarily, railroads had charged more for short hauls than for long ones. In justification of this practice, the railroads pointed to the cost of make-up and switching which was involved when cars were added between terminal points. The practice continued without restraint until 1885. The Commissioner, whose powers were indeed limited, had failed to make any recommendation on this point. It had, however, been raised as the public confidence in the railroads was moderated, but in 1883 and 1884 the influence of the railroad lobbyists was sufficient to prevent the passage of bills to control short hauls. In 1885, it was provided that freight charges for short distances were not to be more than for a longer distance.²³

The state's regulatory efforts were not directed solely toward the financial operations of the railroads, but were equally concerned with those operations which intruded upon the day-to-day life of its citizens, or endangered their safety, or promoted better service. Connecticut pioneered in the establishment of standard times and uniform schedules in the operation of the railroads. The Winchester Observatory of Yale University transmitted automatically, twice daily, over the telegraph lines, the exact time. By 1881, standard time had been adopted by a number of the roads of the state, including the New York, New Haven, and Hartford. At the Commissioner's request, the meridian of the City

Hall of New York City was established as the standard time for the state of Connecticut.²⁴ It was intended that the standard would be adopted by all roads, but there was determined opposition by some lines. The requirement was suspended on the promise that alterations would be made as soon as arrangements could be perfected.²⁵ All but two of the roads had complied with the provision by 1883 and had begun posting regular schedules.²⁶ When the seventy-fifth meridian was adopted as standard time, Connecticut repealed the law designed to regulate local time and accepted the standard, which by 1884, it was reported, had been accepted by 95 percent of all of the cities in the country with populations of more than 10,000.

As the railroads were altering the economic life of the state they were challenging established customs and intruding upon the quiet of the Connecticut community. The shrill steam whistle soon lost the appeal of novelty under such circumstances as those in Danielson, for example, where the engineer would bear down heavily three times as his train crossed each of three intersections within eight rods of each other. It was claimed that the whistle affected the nervous system, and not only disturbed the comfort, but retarded the recovery of invalids. A measure of relief was provided in 1881, when the head of any town or city was authorized to petition the Railroad Commissioner to dispense with whistles within city limits. In those cities where the petition was allowed, the bell was substituted for the whistle.²⁷ By virtue of the relief which this offered and as people became more accustomed to the warnings of the approaching iron monster, complaints about the whistle lessened perceptibly.

Yankees could easily modify their standards of comfort and peace of mind to accommodate economic realities, but to tolerate violations of the accepted proprieties of the observance of the Sabbath was more difficult. This impinged on deeply seated beliefs and forces were marshaled in opposition. The General Conference of Congregational ministers, in 1885, condemned the running of freight trains on Sunday, and other denominations gave their support.²⁹ The handling of freight between sunup and sundown on Sunday was accordingly prohibited in 1887, except that allowance was made for cases of necessity or mercy. Mail trains were permitted before 10:30 A.M. and after 3:00 P.M.³⁰

Apparently somewhat to the surprise of the railroads and of the proponents of the act, the law worked. Only two violations were reported in 1891. As the force of Puritanism weakened in the face of the develop-



(Courtesy Danbury Chamber of Commerce)

DANBURY—SURGICAL PRODUCTS DIVISION, AMERICAN CYANAMID

ing cultural and social forces of the nineties, petitions for exceptions to the rule increased and opposition decreased.

The railroads endangered more than idyllic notions of the Connecticut way of life. Railroading was hazardous to the public and to the employee alike. Railroad managers, ever aware of the relation of casualties to public reaction, were successful in keeping accidents to passengers at a surprisingly low rate. There were seldom more than one or two fatalities a year, and, generally, less than 20 injuries. However, citizens who were not passengers were frequently victims of railroad

accidents. As the population and the railroad traffic increased, there was a proportionate increase in accidents to those to whom the railroads referred as "trespassers." These were all who crossed a railroad track, even at a crossing. Casualties of "trespassers" reached a high of 350 in 1889 and continued at approximately 200 for the remaining years of the century.³³ Most accidents were at grade crossings. Despite laws as early as 1849 restricting new crossings at grade level, the danger persisted. Notwithstanding the fact that the elimination of grade crossings was considered the most pressing problem of railroading, particularly in the Greenwich and New London area, the Senate adjourned in 1887 without taking action on a bill passed by the House which was designed to reduce the number of such crossings two per cent each year.³⁵ An empty gesture toward safety was made in 1889 by legislation requiring railroads to remove one crossing for each sixty miles of track. Only four roads in the state were obliged to remove any. Yet, complete responsibility for the multitude of crossings should not be assigned to the railroads. Farmers, for their own convenience, supported the existence of the many crossings, and pushed through a bill which made the existence during a five year period of a private or farm road *prima facie* evidence of its legality.³⁶ The Assembly generally, however, seemed to concur with the judgment that the desirability of eliminating grade crossings as fast as practicable was hardly debatable. It was provided that the construction of these crossings would be permissible only with the permission of the Commissioner, and under his direction grade crossings were to be diminished as new highways were constructed.³⁷

Injuries to employees mounted at an unbelievable rate. For the selected years 1874, 1879, 1884, 1889, 1894, and 1899, there were 16, 8, 26, 30, 23, and 30 fatalities, while injuries increased from 19 in the first of these years to 320 in 1889, and continued at 165 in 1899.³⁸ As railroad managers strove for greater and greater profits, traffic was increased without a corresponding increase in motive power or in labor force. Workers, anxious for extra pay, worked beyond the point at which operation was safe.³⁹ The railroad managers evidenced scant concern for the welfare of employees. The coupling of trains was easily the most hazardous duty of the employees. As accidents mounted, the companies were pressed to have safe couplers installed on freight trains.

The *Hartford Courant* could not think of anyone who would oppose automatic couplers except the owners of the railroads and the undertakers.⁴⁰ The railroad managers blandly pleaded the impracticability of legislation⁴¹ designed to enforce the installation of automatic couplers. Legislation did no more than indicate the attitude of the state. Despite the urging of the railroad association, newspapers, and the legislature, an efficient coupler was not forthcoming during the century. The key to this failure was probably not exclusively technical inability. Efforts to develop a coupler might have been intensified except that by law the railroads were not liable for injuries to their employees where there was contributory negligence. An attempt, in 1882, to write a liability law without reference to the negligence of the employee, was blocked by the railroads. The railroads claimed that the inherent risk was reflected in the compensation paid. Although the railroad strikes which had seized the country in 1877 had not had any impact on Connecticut, where the relative compactness of the systems permitted the workmen to live at home and so made the wage less inadequate,⁴² the railroad argument was specious so long as the supply of laborers exceeded the demand. That many standards prevailed in different states was, also, a thin excuse for delay.⁴³

Technical developments progressed at a faster rate. As the durability of steel was proved, steel rails were substituted for iron. By 1880, it was reported, 72 per cent of the rails were of steel and virtually all of the iron rails had been replaced by the end of the century.⁴⁴ The Washburn Car Wheel Company of Hartford began the manufacture of wheels with steel rims in 1869. Within a few years, paper filled, steel rimmed wheels became standard equipment. The importance of steel in the building of bridges had just been proved in 1878, and its importance to bridge construction in Connecticut was immediately realized.⁴⁵ Block signals were introduced on the New York, New Haven, and Hartford line in 1887, and the practicability of a continuous braking system was recognized by the next year.⁴⁶

As these changes occurred, Connecticut had entered a new stage in railroad consolidation. After the New York and New England assumed management of the defunct Boston and Hartford in 1875, the New England cleared the title to the old Hartford, Providence, and

Fishkill by 1877; extended the line beyond Waterbury to the Hudson in 1881; provided a connection for East Hartford for Springfield over the Connecticut Central; and purchased, in 1880, one-half interest in the New England Transfer Company, which operated a steamer be-



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

ROBERTSVILLE—UNION CHAIR FACTORY

tween the Pennsylvania Railroad in Jersey City and the Harlem River terminal of the New Haven.

Meanwhile, the New Haven and Hartford line did well. By 1876, the bonds which had come due had been paid off, the road had no funded or floating debt, and the dividends were limited to ten per cent. The surplus was to go back into the company. The Airline from Willimantic to New Haven was eventually completed in 1876. After a pooling arrangement with the company proved unworkable, the New

Haven leased the company for 99 years. Control of the Northampton, New Haven road (the old Canal Road) was gained in 1887.⁴⁷ The main danger to the road came from attempts to tap the New Haven markets.

Characteristic of the seventies and the eighties were the attempts to construct roads parallel to existing lines. The old New York and New Haven in 1868 had blocked the construction of a road from New York to New Haven, but in the railroad battles of the last century, one victory did not win the war. It was to check such competition that control had been gained of the Airline and the New Haven and Hartford. For the same reason controlling interest was purchased in a projected line from Hartford to Saybrook. Through the legislature and the courts the proposed Hartford and Harlem Road was checked.⁴⁸ Until this time the New Haven had sought to direct the traffic over its lines and to acquire new lines only when forced to do so by competition. Its policy was changed to embrace aggressive tactics which were to result in the incorporation of the New York and New England into the New Haven system to complete the monopoly.

The last phase of railroad development in Connecticut occupied the years from 1887 to 1896. The strangling of the New York and New England began in 1888 when the New Haven began to divert the traffic from the New England. Despite the protests of the New England, every effort was made to reduce it to insolvency. In the bitter war, the New Haven gained control of the Housatonic in 1892. Gradually all of the roads around the New England were brought under the control of the New Haven, until by 1892 the eastern half of the state had been brought under control. There remained only the task of shutting off the flow of New England traffic into New York over the route of the New York and Northern route. This was accomplished in cooperation with the New York Central. The New Haven and the New York Central had an agreement not to compete for the New York traffic. By agreement, J. P. Morgan bought up the stock of the Northern, foreclosed on the company, reorganized it and sold it to the New York Central. The New England was completely cut off from New York and went into bankruptcy on December 27, 1893. Morgan continued buying stock for the New Haven, and the Vanderbilt interests entered the market to constitute a minority interest in the company. The New England was

reorganized in 1895 and Morgan offered his interest in it to the New Haven. The consolidation did not evoke the popular outcry against monopoly which was expected. The hope of checking speculation in railroads and the desire for better service overbalanced the objections.⁴⁹ Railroads were to enter a period of unified control.

A favorable climate for the development of industry prevailed in Connecticut in the nineteenth century. With the growth of the railroads, there emerged a transportation system which would allow the state's industries to take advantage of the state's position as the gateway to New England and the nearby markets. The banks and insurance companies held large surpluses of capital sufficient to finance an expanding industrial system. To the ingenious abilities of the native population were being added those of foreign immigrants in numbers to create a surplus of laborers. Of equal importance were the very favorable corporation laws.

The extremely liberal capitalization requirements encouraged the beginnings of new businesses. The laws had been amended for special purposes so frequently that, in the opinion of Governor Hubbard, they had become "relaxed and unguarded." It was possible for a company to be formed "with any amount of nominal capital, by parties which are utterly bankrupt, and to commence business with nothing at all, or only a minimum percentage paid in." Corporations were permitted to come into existence even though they were bankrupt from the beginning. In the absence of cash, capital requirements were oftentimes met by entering personal property or real estate at ridiculous or fraudulent valuations or by the conveyance of patent rights of uncertain value.⁵¹ The Governor supported his report of these conditions by calling attention to the 79 corporations chartered in 1877. In general the stockholders of these companies were non-residents of the state of Connecticut, but it seems reasonable to assume that there was an uncertain number of Connecticut companies enjoying the same liberalities.⁵² A hesitant legislature would not act until the recommendations of the Democratic Governor Hubbard were endorsed a year later by the Republican, Charles B. Andrews.⁵³ A Board of Commissioners, appointed to investigate the corporate laws of the state, reported in 1880. The independence assumed by business organizations in relation to a government in-

vestigation is suggested, perhaps, by the fact that less than 17 percent of the existing corporations replied to the committee's inquiry. The Assembly accepted the commission's recommendation that the capital requirement must be subscribed in full before any company com-

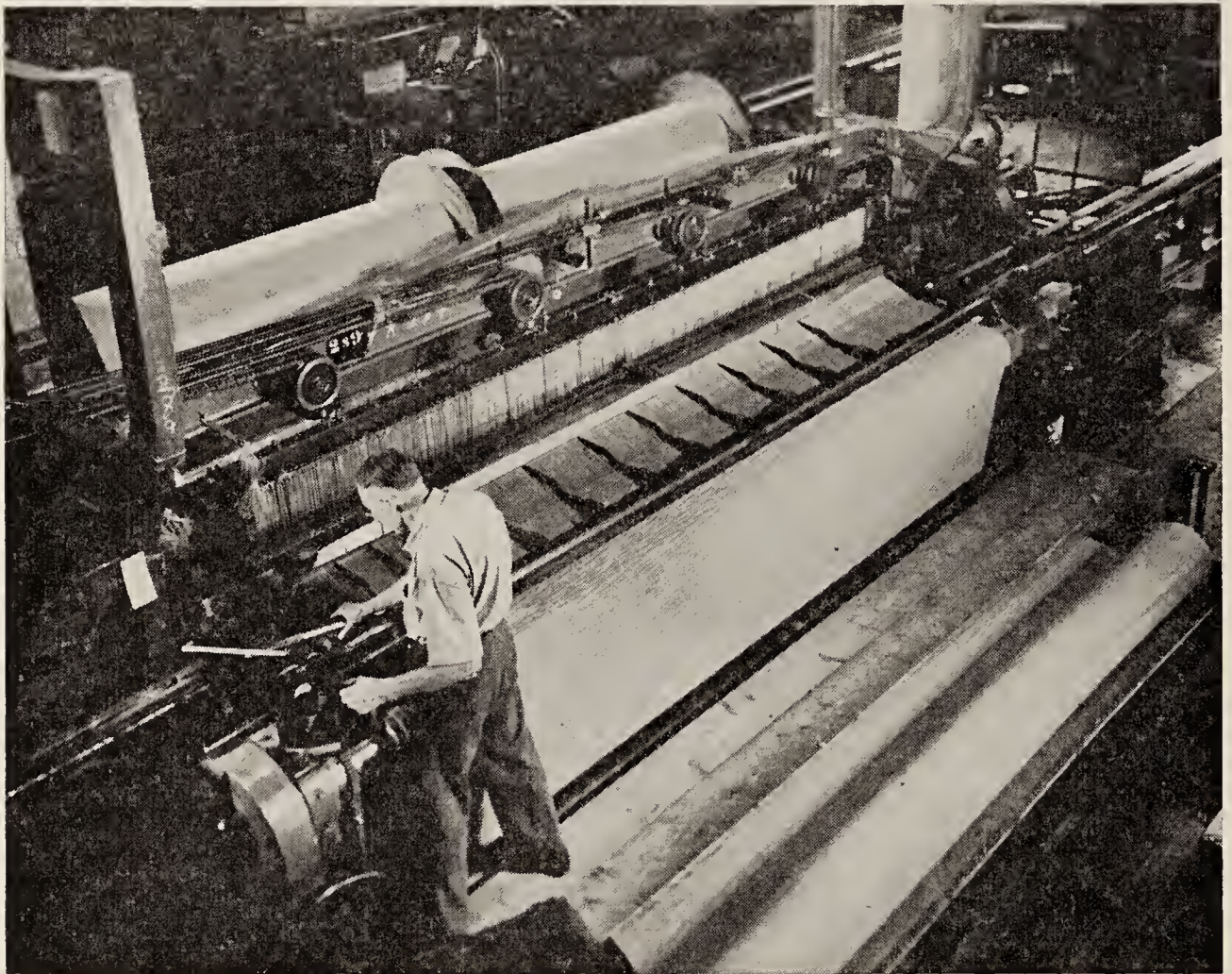


(Courtesy Mills Coll., Conn. State Lib.)

RIVERTON—LAMBERT HITCHCOCK CHAIR FACTORY, PHOTO 1935

menced business, but went beyond the commission in requiring that at least 20 percent of the stock must be in cash. The commission would have accepted real or personal property in lieu of cash.⁵⁴ A two-thirds majority of the stockholders was required to alter the capitalization of the company, whereas formerly the companies were permitted to increase or decrease capitalization at will.⁵⁵ The next year, the Assembly moved to rectify partially a defect in the original law by requiring that 20 percent of any increase should be paid for in cash and that surplus

earnings or property should be estimated at their actual value. It was later recognized that to require a two-thirds vote of directors for a stock increase was scant limitation since there were usually so few stockholders. It came to be required that such increases must be authorized by the General Assembly.⁵⁶ Many of the companies organized under



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

THOMPSONVILLE—SCENE IN BIGELOW-SANFORD
CARPET COMPANY, INC. PLANT

these requirements were marginal, but some lived and extended their operations beyond their original purpose until this prerogative was specifically limited by the law of 1880.⁵⁷

The manufacturing industries of the state increased steadily during the period 1870 to 1900, until by the end of the century Connecticut was characterized as the "Lancashire of New England."⁵⁸ The gross product of the manufactures of the state had more than doubled,

increasing from 161 million in 1870 to almost 353 million by the end of the century. A continuance of an upward trend was suggested by an increase of over one hundred million in the last decade of the century. More industries were secured by patent in Connecticut than in any other state. One patent to every 796 persons had been issued in 1890, and one to every 1,203 in 1900. Nearly one-fourth of the state's total population of 908,420 was engaged in manufacturing. The number of manufacturing establishments in the state had increased 78 percent or from 5,128 in 1870 to 9,128 in 1900. The large growth did not indicate that Connecticut had abandoned the traditional small shop. There were 92 foundries established in the last decade, 31 fur hat establishments, 17 hardware, and 16 bicycle companies, for example. Of the total number of manufacturing establishments, half were the so-called hand or neighborhood trades and their production amounted to \$31,704,463 or nine percent of the total.⁵⁹

The story of Connecticut industry, however, was not one of uninterrupted success, and economic historians have, perhaps, erred in concentrating on the successes. For each business which succeeded, there were uncounted numbers which failed. An indication of these is included in the report of the Commission on Joint Stock Laws. Of the 2,131 companies to which the commission sent letters, 1,246 were "out of existence or had ceased to transact business."⁶⁰ Of the 6,822 establishments in business in 1890, 27 percent, or 1,847, were not in operation in 1900. There was, nonetheless, no lack of confidence in the viability of the industrial system. For those who failed, some 4,000 new establishments hoped to succeed.⁶¹

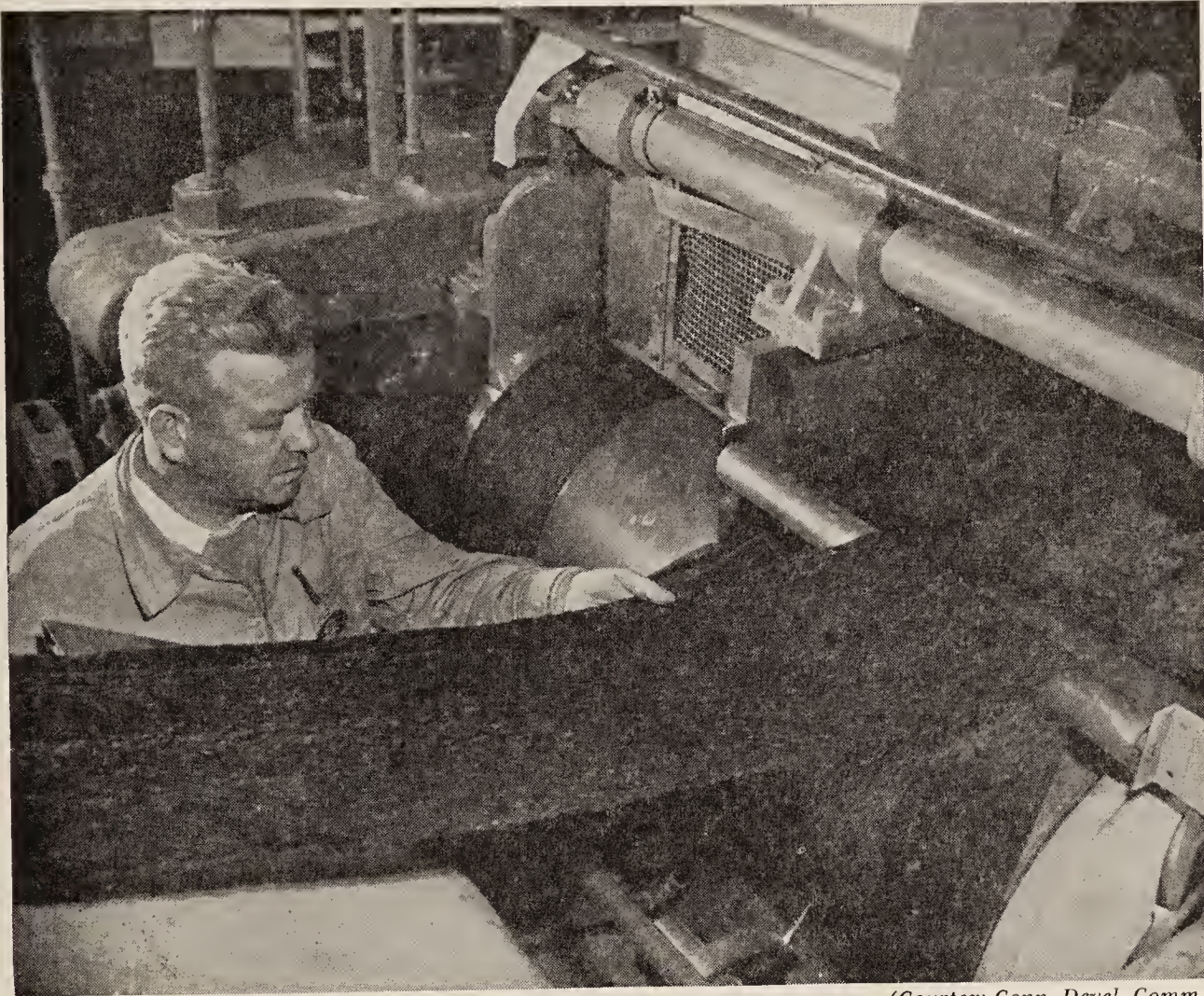
The industries were redistributed throughout the state's 61 towns, although they were more concentrated in the six largest cities, those with populations over 20,000. The six cities, New Haven, Bridgeport, Waterbury, Hartford, New Haven, and New Britain, produced 48 percent of the state's gross product and constituted 39 percent of the state's population. The gross product of three of the cities, Waterbury, Bridgeport, and Hartford, had increased at a faster rate than that of the state as a whole, while that of New Haven and Meriden had increased at a slower rate.⁶² The concentration of the brass and copper industry along the Housatonic and Naugatuck rivers enabled the three towns of An-

sonia, Derby, and Shelton, which had a combined population of 26,183, to fabricate products which had a greater dollar volume than products made in New Britain and Meriden combined. Torrington shared in the benefits of the brass and copper industry. There were other towns which were centers of specific industries: Naugatuck of rubber, Norwich of cotton goods, Danbury of hats, and Manchester of silk.⁶³ Items of machinery, materials of war, and articles to enable modernization all contributed to the increased gross product, but textiles remained throughout the period of first importance in the industrial history of the state.⁶⁴

The gross textile product for the period amounted to approximately \$50,000,000 a year. The cotton mills were clustered along the streams that flowed into the Thames. In Norwich, Thompson, Putnam, Plainfield, Killingly, and Windham were located more than 70 percent of all of the cotton mills in the state. The number of spindles increased during the period until, in 1900, there were more than 1,000,000 in the state.⁶⁵ Among the more prominent companies were the Ponemah Mills, which had rebuilt the great mills at Baltic, and the Grosvenor-Dale Mills of Thompson. A significant trend was the increase in the dyeing and finishing of textiles.⁶⁶ A closely allied industry, that of thread manufacture, was dominated by the Willimantic Linen Company, which gained international recognition for its products at the centennial exposition at Philadelphia in 1876. The company changed its name to the Willimantic Thread Company, and, in 1898, combined with the American Thread Company.⁶⁷ The gross product of the woolen manufactures exceeded that of cotton by approximately 50 percent or by about 22 million dollars. The largest and most modern woolen mills were located at Rockville, Stafford Springs, and Broad Brook. Silk kept pace with the other textiles by increasing its gross product to 12,000,000 by 1900. The industry was concentrated in the Cheney Mills at Manchester, but smaller mills could be found up and down the Connecticut Valley.⁶⁸ Although Connecticut ranked sixth among the states in the production of textiles, the gross product had begun to level off, and textiles were producing a lesser percentage of the state's total. They constituted approximately 27 percent of the total production in 1880, but only 14 percent in 1900. This was occasioned by the greater di-

versification as new products were introduced in response to the demands of a mechanical, urban civilization.

The brass industry, which had started in Torrington and Waterbury and had moved up the Naugatuck Valley, had begun to rival



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

NAUGATUCK—SCENE IN UNITED STATES
RUBBER COMPANY SYNTHETIC RUBBER PLANT

textiles as the leading industry in the state.⁷⁰ The technique of rolling brass introduced in the early part of the century in connection with the clock industry had become an article of commerce in the latter part of the century until it alone grossed upwards of 29 million dollars in 1900.⁷¹ The brass industry, through the utilization of a more highly skilled labor force, was able to gross a larger product than the textile industry with a smaller capital investment. Brass castings and brass

ware, which combined had a capital investment of slightly over 13 million dollars, grossed a product valued at \$18,739,585, while cotton goods, with an investment of over 27 million, grossed a product of only 15 and one-half million. The comparison is even more striking when it is noted that the brass industry had invested slightly less than three



(Courtesy Stamford Historical Society)

STAMFORD—FIRST IRON FOUNDRY, BUILT IN 1830; LATER THE FIRST WOOLEN MILL, AND AFTERWARD THE DIAMOND ICE COMPANY

million in implements and machinery and the cotton industry had over 10 million invested in these components of production.⁷² The leading name in this industry continued to be that of the Scoville Manufacturing Company, which had added daguerreotypes, plates, and brass shells to their rapidly diversifying line. Also, the Coe Brass Company had been identified as the most important rolling plant in the country.⁷³ “The hold of the Naugatuck Valley brass workers . . . was to remain unshaken for an indefinite time to come.”⁷⁴

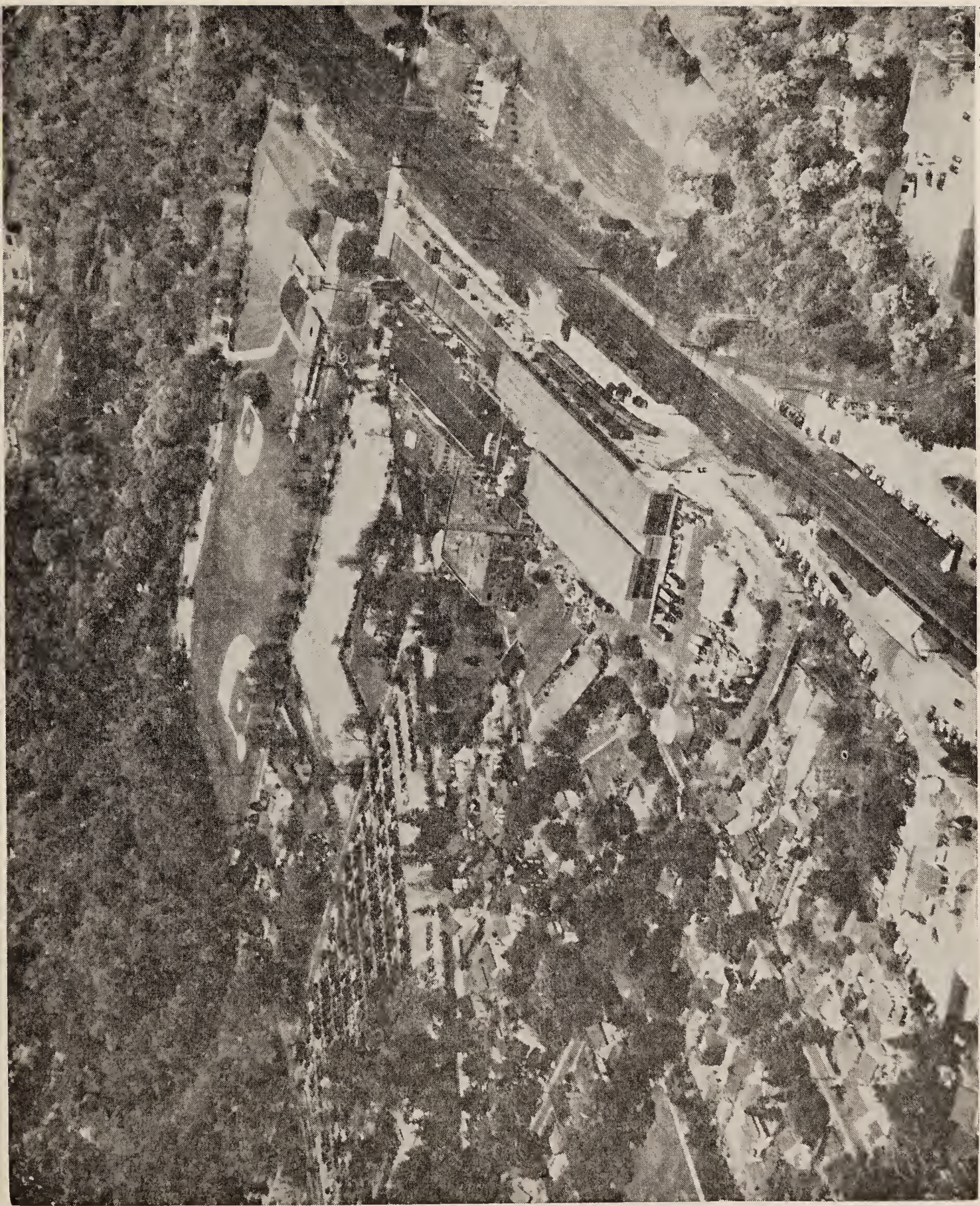
Although it had not achieved as large a dollar volume as the brass industry, the industry which was most deeply rooted in the economic history of the state was hardware. Centered in this industry were an

unaccountable number of products developed from the handicrafts born of Connecticut ingenuity and adapted to a factory system. The industry, including cutlery, tools, and saddlery hardware, grossed over 23,000,000 by 1900. This represented an increase of more than 50 percent during the last 20 years.⁷⁵ The growth of the industry was marked by a series of inventions which increased the productive capacity many fold. Special machinery was introduced for straightening wire, for example. Also, an automatic staple machine for making buckles and rings at the rate of from 75 to 175 a minute and machines for making barbed wire were introduced. These last cut, bent, sharpened the staples, tied them into knots on strands of wire, and ran them off in reels at the rate of 100 knots of barb a minute. The full benefit of machinery, however, was not realized by the industry because of the prejudice of many of the operators. For certain operations, sub-contracting and piece work remained characteristic of the industry. As a result of the labor saving machines used, there developed a uniformity of production, although a fine tolerance was not generally required by the nature of the products.⁷⁶ New Britain continued to be the center of the industry, and here was produced more than half of the hardware articles made in the state.⁷⁷ The Russell and Erwin, P. & F. Corbin, Stanley Rule and Level, Landers, Frary and Clark, and North and Judd companies and the Stanley Works all added to their facilities, introduced new products, expanded their markets, and refined the industrial processes through research and managerial improvements. To the production of these leaders of the industry was added that of many others, including the Union Hardware Company of Torrington, the Wallace Barnes, the Sessions Foundry, and the Horton Manufacturing companies of Bristol, the A. P. Plant Company of Plantsville, the Clark Brothers Company of Milldale, and the Peck, Stowe, and Wilcox Company of Southington.⁷⁸ As products bearing Connecticut trademarks were sold throughout the world, the legend of Yankee notions was altered and extended.

As Connecticut was extending its reputation in hardware, the state was becoming known, too, for its excellence in precision machinery. It was through machine tools that the industrial processes were transformed from one of approximation to one of minute precision. In Connecticut, this development was closely allied with the manufacture

of fire arms and of sewing machines.⁷⁹ A machine tool is one which guides or impels minor tools in the cutting or shaping of metal.⁸⁰ In the making of the band wheels of a sewing machine, for example, the wheel was first chucked, that is, placed in a rotary holder, and then acted upon by five tools in a turret head. A tool actuated by a handle was then pushed forward through a power spindle to face off the back of the hub, after which a groove in the rim was turned by a tool rest at the side.⁸¹ By this machine operation, 110 band wheels could be produced in the same time as had been previously required to produce 25. Another indication of the effect of machine tools on productive capacity is indicated by the turret lathes used in making screws, which turned out from eight to 20 times as many screws as hand turned lathes, although these had been a great advance over the hand turret lathe, itself a labor saving machine. Improved flasks and molding machines enabled one man and a boy to mold 300 balance wheels for sewing machines in one day, whereas a skilled workman could produce but 65 ten years previously. Whereas one skilled laborer in 1870 produced from 35 to 50 arms for a sewing machine in a day, a comparatively unskilled laborer in 1880 could, with the use of an improved hinged flask, produce 112 a day.⁸² The process of foundry work was further speeded by the use of tumbling barrels for cleaning. The machine tool industry together with the foundry work grossed almost 19,000,000 in 1900. A measure of the precision of the tools is provided when it is remembered that the acceptable tolerance had become one and one-half thousandth of an inch by 1870 and one-half of one thousandth of an inch by 1880.^{82a} Elisha K. Root, who was primarily responsible for the design and construction of the equipment of the Colt Arms Factory, was a leader in the development of machine tools and was responsible for training a host of mechanics who introduced machine tools in various industries throughout the state. Among the early leaders in the construction of machine tools were the Walters Brothers' Company and the Pacific Iron Works of Bridgeport, and the Billings and Spencer, the Hartford Machine Screw, and Pratt and Whitney companies of Hartford.⁸³

Other established industries continued to add to their gross product. The silver industry continued to be centered in Meriden and Wall-



(Courtesy Chamber of Commerce of Greenwich, Inc.)

GREENWICH—INDUSTRIAL VIEW, SHOWING THE ELECTROLUX CORPORATION

ingford, but shops could be found throughout Hartford and New Haven counties. Most of these shops, no doubt, produced the cheaper white metal, or Britannia Ware. Their total gross product increased from six million in 1880 to about nine and one-half million in 1900.⁸⁴



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

MANCHESTER—CHENEY BROS., WORLD'S LARGEST SILK MILLS

The Mallory Hat Company was the largest of the 33 hat factories located in Danbury in 1895, but other companies which were to become important in the industry were organized in the last quarter of the century. These included the D. E. Loewe & Company, which was begun in 1879, and the Frank H. Lee Company, which was established in 1885.⁸⁵ Collectively the industry produced hats and allied products valued in 1900 at \$7,546,882, which represented an increase of more than 70 percent in a 20 year period. The rubber industry, which in its

formative years was dependent almost entirely on the need for rubber shoes and garments and for elastic webbing, was by the end of the century beginning to benefit from the demand for pneumatic tires. In 20 years the value of rubber goods produced in Connecticut increased almost 400 percent, from \$1,710,761 in 1880 to \$8,246,240 in 1900. The firearms and ammunition production, which had declined after the Civil War, was stimulated by the materiel needs of the Spanish-American War.

Not merely did established industries expand, but others were established to produce new articles in response to the demands created by the rapidly developing urban society. The leaders in electrical supplies were the Bryant Electric Company of Bridgeport (1880), the Hart and Hegeman Company of Hartford (1890), and the Trumbull Electric Company (1899). The gross product of electrical supplies in 1900 was \$3,167,842, which was about three-quarters of a million dollars less than that of products of plumbing, gas, and steam heating.⁸⁷ The importance of fashion in the Gay Nineties was reflected in the growth of the corset industry. Connecticut's domination of this industry was due to the doctors I. De Ver Warner and Lucien C. Warner, who designed the original "health corset" and began a company at Bridgeport with a capital of \$2,500. In 1900, the product of the corset industry in Connecticut amounted to almost seven million dollars.⁸⁸ Although the typewriter industry achieved great volume only in the twentieth century, the gross product of the industry in Connecticut in 1900 was three-fourths of a million dollars.

As Connecticut industries continued to increase their production, there was a trend toward consolidation. To an increasing extent, the personally owned shops were being combined under the management of large corporations. The American Brass Company, organized in 1899, brought together the shops of Waterbury, Torrington, and Ansonia.⁹⁰ The Russell and Erwin Manufacturing Company and the P. & F. Corbin Company were combined as the American Hardware Company in 1902.⁹¹ The process of combining the many silver Britannia companies, which had begun in 1852 when several of these companies in Meriden combined, was completed by the formation of the International Silver Company in 1898.⁹² The Willimantic Linen Company and

the American Thread Company of Holyoke merged in 1898.⁹³ For the most part, however, Connecticut industries remained under the management of Connecticut citizens, who contributed the largest portion of the capital.

The growth of Connecticut industry was interrupted only slightly and temporarily by the Panic of 1893. There was, however, a noticeable decline in the production of Connecticut industries during the Panic. The depression is generally considered to have covered the period from June, 1893, to September, 1894. The lowest points in general were in January and July, although the low point for a number of industries was the Fall of 1893. The estimated production was about three-quarters of the normal in the manufacture of shoes, buttons, brass goods, cast iron, corsets, hardware, hosiery, rubber goods, silk, and wood-working. Production did not fall this low in clocks, cotton goods, and cotton cloth, but fell below 60 percent of normal production in wool, cutlery, and firearms, and achieved only about two-thirds of normal production in silverware, wire goods, carriage making, and machine building.⁹⁴

NOTES—CHAPTER XXVI

¹ Public Documents, 1877, Report of the Railroad Commissioner p. 7.

² George Pierce Baker, *The Formation of the New England Railroad Systems*.

³ In addition to the main line, the company leased the Norwich and Worcester and the Dutchess and Columbia, held charter rights for the extension of the road westward to the Hudson and for the completion of a road from Willimantic to New Haven, which the company had no immediate desire to exercise. *Ibid.*, pp. 50, 52-54.

⁴ Baker, *New England Railroad Systems*, p. 55; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 302-303.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 297-300; Baker, *New England Railroad Systems*, pp. 80-81.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁷ Public Acts, 1883, pp. 267-69.

⁸ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 297-98.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 293.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 299; Baker, *New England Railroad Systems*, p. 62.

¹¹ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 68.

¹² See reports of Railroad Commissioners for the period.

¹⁴ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 300-18.

¹⁵ Public Documents, 1877, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 77.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1878, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 3.

¹⁷ Public Acts, 1883, p. 320.

¹⁹ Public Documents, 1875, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, pp. 15-16.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1878, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, pp. 4-6.

- ²¹ Public Acts, 1878, p. 47.
- ²² Baker, *New England Railroad Systems*, pp. 60-61.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 1885, Vol. I, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 39; Public Acts, 1885, p. 45².
- ²⁴ Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 37.
- ²⁵ Public Documents, 1882, Vol. I, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 17.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1885, Vol. I, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 35; Public Acts, 1885, p. 45¹.
- ²⁷ Public Documents, 1875, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 21; *Ibid.*, 1880, Vol. I, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 33; *Ibid.*, 1882, Vol. I, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 11; Public Acts, 1879, p. 12; 1881, p. 12; 1882, p. 170.
- ²⁹ Public Documents, 1885, Vol. I, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 40.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 1888, Vol. I, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 40; Public Acts, 1887, p. 665.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, 1875, 1880, 1885, 1890, 1895, 1900, Reports of the Railroad Commissioners, *passim*.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 30.
- ³⁶ Public Acts, 1889, pp. 81, 134, 167.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1893, pp. 362, 409.
- ³⁸ Public Documents, 1875, 1880, 1885, 1890, 1895, 1900, Reports of Railroad Commissioners, *passim*.
- ³⁹ Public Document, 1882, Vol. I, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 25.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 39.
- ⁴¹ Public Acts, 1882, p. 148.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 1878, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 6.
- ⁴⁴ Public Documents, 1877, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, pp. 7-12; *ibid.*, 1879, Vol. I, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 36; *ibid.*, 1880, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 31.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 1879, Vol. I, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, pp. 36-39.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 1888, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 16; *ibid.*, 1889, Report of the Railroad Commissioner, p. 61.
- ⁴⁷ Baker, *New England Railroad Systems*, pp. 82-85.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 82-87.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-70.
- ⁵¹ Public Documents, 1878, Special Message from the Governor concerning Joint Capital Stock Corporations, pp. 3-6.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*
- ⁵³ Public Documents, 1880, Vol. I, Governor's Message, 1879, pp. 6-7; *ibid.*, 1880, Vol. I, Governor's Message, pp. 13-15.
- ⁵⁴ Public Documents, 1880, Vol. II, Report of the Board of Commissioners . . . to Examine and Revise the Joint Stock Laws of the State, pp. 3-97.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*; General Statutes of Connecticut, revision of 1866, p. 170.
- ⁵⁶ Public Acts, 1881, pp. 18-19; 1889, p. 37.
- ⁵⁷ Public Acts, 1880, pp. 32-61.
- ⁵⁸ Twelfth Census, Manufactures, Part 2 (Washington, 1902), p. 75.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77; Tenth Census, Manufactures, p. xxi.
- ⁶⁰ Public Documents, 1880, Vol. II, Report of the Board of Commissioners . . . to Examine the Joint Stock Laws of the State (Hartford, 1879), p. 4.
- ⁶¹ Twelfth Census, Manufactures, Part 2, p. 80.

- ⁶² Twelfth Census, pp. 80-82.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-85.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 80.
- ⁶⁵ Twelfth Census, 1900, pp. 79-81.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*; Chandler, "Industrial History," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, pp. 266-67.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 284-85; Pliny Leroy Harwood, *History of Eastern Connecticut*, 3 vols. (Chicago, 1932) Vol. 2, p. 592.
- ⁶⁸ Twelfth Census, 1900, Chandler, "Industrial History," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, pp. 250-54.
- ⁷⁰ Twelfth Census, 1900, p. 86; Clark, *History of Manufacturing*, Vol. II, p. 181.
- ⁷¹ Penrose R. Hoopes, "Early Clockmaking in Connecticut."
- ⁷² Eleventh Census, 1890, p. 86.
- ⁷³ Chandler, "Industrial History," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, pp. 70-76.
- ⁷⁴ Clark, *History of Manufacturing*, Vol. II, p. 369.
- ⁷⁵ Twelfth Census, 1900, pp. 87-89; Tenth Census, 1880, pp. 33, 45, 79.
- ⁷⁶ Tenth Census, 1880, pp. 5-12.
- ⁷⁷ Twelfth Census, 1900, p. 84.
- ⁷⁸ Chandler, "Industrial History," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, pp. 91-153.
- ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 390-91.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁸¹ Tenth Census, 1880, p. 38.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- ^{82a} Tenth Census, 1880, p. 36.
- ⁸³ Chandler, "Industrial History," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, pp. 390-401.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 165-70.
- ⁸⁵ Chandler, "Industrial History," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, pp. 307-10.
- ⁸⁷ Chandler, "Industrial History," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, pp. 358-61.
- ⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 291-92.
- ⁹⁰ Chandler, "Industrial History," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, p. 75.
- ⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 103.
- ⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 165.
- ⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 285.
- ⁹⁴ *Public Documents*, 1895, Vol. II, *Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 1895, pp. 167-264.

Chapter XXVII

Agriculture, Labor, and the Foreign-born

IN THE period of readjustment following the American Civil War, industrial management had completely dominated labor, taking advantage of the glutted labor market to enforce its will. Manufacturers' leagues had been organized to check the nascent labor movement and strikes were quickly concluded by cutting off credit at the company store.¹ Despite legal restriction, political coercion apparently had not been abetted. It was alleged, for example, that a representative of the Sprague Mills stood guard over the ballot box at election time, checking off the company's employees as they came to vote. The arrogance of industry had been painfully obvious in its control of some of the municipal elections.²

Labor was disheartened at the barrenness of its attempts to improve its position in society.

The leaders of labor reform turned to political action. Despite earlier failures, the increase in the number of unions from six in 1865 to 27 in 1871 provided hope for success. However, not all of the workmen were convinced of the wisdom of political action. Some preferred to continue to regard the labor reform movement as a social and benevolent impulse. Others were fearful of irritating their employers. As an independent political group, labor made little headway. Its political convention was poorly attended, and its treasury was short of funds. It was a sufficient challenge to the established parties that the Democrats absorbed many of the principles of the labor party in their platform. An independent labor party, however, was regarded as a threat to the very stability of society, and, thoroughly discredited, made a pitiful

showing on election day. The General Assembly ignored pleas for the suspension of the law which designated certain labor efforts as a conspiracy, for repeal of the contract labor law by which foreigners had been imported, it was alleged, to swell the labor market in the state, and for enactment of legislation to outlaw political coercion. The only tangible positive result of labor's efforts was the creation of a Bureau of Labor Statistics.³

This Bureau virtually died a-borning. The legislature made a niggardly appropriation of \$1000. to cover expenses including salaries for a Commissioner and his assistant. Also, the Bureau lacked power to enforce its requests for reliable statistics. The first Commissioner, James Babcock, who has been characterized as a political hack, could not overcome the operational difficulties. The second Commissioner, Samuel J. Starr of Middletown, suggested that the industrialists' deep absorption in business explained their failure to supply the necessary information. In fact, a deep opposition to the Bureau had swelled within the ranks of management.⁴ Governor Charles R. Ingersoll, who had not been overly sympathetic with the Bureau from the beginning, stated, in 1875, his belief that the work of the Bureau did not justify its continuation. The General Assembly, at a time when labor had been further depressed by the Panic of 1873, abolished the Bureau.⁵

Wage earners were hard hit by the Panic of 1873. The number of unemployed became larger than in any recent former year. Many factories worked part time and others with a reduced labor force. Because the supply of labor permitted it, from 1873 to 1875 wages were reduced from five to twenty percent, even in industries, such as firearms and silver, which enjoyed full production. No single wage increase was reported during the period. In general, the workingmen did not resort to strikes, yet one of the most severe strikes in the state's history did occur in the textile mills at Taftville.⁶

The employees at Taftville struck on April 1, 1875, when the company refused to restore more than one-half of two cuts of twelve percent. These had been made at the beginning of the panic and when the company had sought to break the workingmen's union which had been organized at the factory. Immediately when the strike began, the company employed new workers and directed the former employees to

vacate company houses within one month. The strike produced only the necessity to seek work elsewhere.

Some of the difficulties at Taftville devolved from the company store operation which was characteristic of Connecticut industry in this



(Courtesy Danbury Chamber of Commerce)

DANBURY—FAIR GROUNDS

period. Technically, the store was owned by the treasurer of the Company, but for all practical purposes, it was operated by the company. The operatives, who received from \$8.25 to \$9.00 per week for 67 hours of work, were convinced that the Company was determined to regain all of the wages paid. In addition to withholding one month and three days' salary at the outset, the company retained on each payday sums to cover rent and the store bill. One worker stated that he drew but four dollars from February to April, although he and his daughter to-

gether earned fifteen dollars a week. The Company also refused to advance payments to any worker no matter how great the emergency. The Commissioner of Labor concluded that the Company treated the employees like children or rogues under a policy "calculated to make the operatives completely dependent upon their employers."⁷

The most disturbing evidence of the plight of laborers was the situation of those who wandered from town to town, ostensibly, it was said, to seek employment, but actually to subsist on charities. The head of the Bureau of Labor was careful to distinguish between the common tramp and this new group of vagrants. The General Assembly, however, responded with a severe tramp law, which, in application, seemed to make little differentiation between the two.⁸ Any transient person was subject to arrest without warrant. Those who asked for food were required to work not later than eleven o'clock of the succeeding day. Refusal to perform the labor assigned could result in a jail sentence of not less than thirty days.⁹

One of the most perplexing of labor problems was that of the employment of children. It was common knowledge in the 1870's that children under fourteen, particularly in the smaller villages, were employed in violation of schooling requirements. Both employers and parents shared responsibility for this. For example, some textile mills reported instances where heads of families would accept employment only on the condition that their children would also be employed. Often, children's ages were misrepresented. In some instances, when employers insisted that children go to school, parents would find employment for the children elsewhere. Some employers, on the other hand, sought to take advantage of the cheaper wages which were paid children.¹⁰ In no case did an employer increase the wage rate in order to enable a single member of the household to earn a sum sufficient to provide subsistence for the family and make multiple earnings unnecessary. School attendance was invariably higher during periods of economic distress.¹¹

In 1882, children under 14 years of age were required to have received 60 full days of instruction within the twelve months preceding the month of employment.¹² It was apparent that any law designed to control child labor would have to carry with it the power of enforce-

ment. When the permissive age of employment was reduced to thirteen, the law provided for the appointment of inspectors charged with its enforcement. Enforcement, however, was opposed by some parents and by towns which feared that families would become pauperized by it,



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

CANTON CENTER—A. L. MILLS IN A 1902 TOBACCO SCENE

and its effectiveness was limited thereby.¹³ A climate favorable to the control of child labor had not then developed.

Gradually, a shorter work week came to prevail, although the eight hour law remained a mockery throughout the century. Employers generally used the convenient clause, "unless otherwise agreed by the parties," to escape application of this shorter day. A single exception was the cigar making industry, which, it was explained, was little affected by the introduction of machinery and was supervised by the Federal Government. Nevertheless, the percentage of establishments in which

the daily hours of work were ten or less increased from 79.61 in 1860 to 82.81 in 1880. A slight improvement was noted after 1887 when a law was passed limiting the employment of women and children to ten hours a day.¹⁴ It was suggested that this law had the effect of limiting the hours of work for men as well.¹⁵ In general, however, the law seems to have been successfully evaded whenever the needs of the company purportedly demanded it. It was charged that it was applied when it served the interest of the employer.¹⁶ By 1892, less than two percent of the factories worked more than 60 hours a week. Thirty-five percent of the establishments had adopted the short Saturday, and a few were granting 60 hours' pay for 59 hours' work. The shortening of the work week was the most concrete benefit which had been achieved for labor.¹⁷

Laborers, in the 1880's, had been indifferent and apathetic about their status. A feeling prevailed that their condition was bad, but not likely to improve. There was a general attitude that someone, other than themselves, was responsible for their unfavorable circumstances.¹⁸ Of the laboring class it was said that they, possessing "no great quantity of real estate . . . , find it difficult to maintain a permanent home. Their engagement is by the hour; by the hour they are paid . . . ; they are at work with machinery and must work when the machine runs, and stop when it stops. . . . They have perfect liberty of contract, can go when they will, and can be discharged at the will of the employer. . . . The bright, intelligent man finds himself distanced in the race for a job by the ignorant and less competent, whose principal qualification is his ability to live and work on small wages. The worst feature is their lack of hope."¹⁹ Employees were so afraid of retaliation by their employers that they were hesitant even to furnish information concerning industrial conditions to the labor commissioner. Some requested that envelopes bearing the identification of the Bureau not be addressed to their place of employment. Others would receive this mail only at a post office other than the one nearest their home. There were manufacturers who had a horror of any statement of grievances and any employee who submitted such did so at the risk of being discharged. Once discharged, it was difficult to secure employment. The blacklist was, perhaps, not used so extensively as labor claimed, and, doubtlessly, there were instances when its use was charged as a cover-up for in-

efficiency or drunkenness on the job, but it was used frequently enough to be feared and served as an effective deterrent to protest.²⁰

There prevailed a feeling that labor's condition could be improved through legislation.²¹ The Commissioner of Labor advised the workingmen that, if they wished effective legislation, they must be willing to bear the odium of pressing for it. The most the state could do, it was held, was to give the laborer a chance to help himself. If labor had and would present factual information on difficult conditions, there was a chance of securing justice.²² To an increasing extent workingmen found strength in organization while their growing discontent was reflected in the increasing number of strikes.²³

Strikes affected an alarming proportion of businesses in 1886. In the previous five years, no more than 35 establishments had been involved in strikes in a single year. In 1886, 144 businesses, employing almost one-third of the state's labor force, were involved.²⁴ It was generally agreed that the core of the labor difficulties was the inequitable distribution of the products of labor. That the laboring man was inevitably "condemned to incessant toil" and for wages "insufficient to provide his family with the bare necessities of life,"²⁵ was challenged by the strikes. More than half of these concerned wages and were centered in the metallic trades which were reputed to employ laborers with more than average intelligence and to pay better than average wages.²⁶ The strike proved an effective weapon; more than half of the strikes in 1886 were successful in securing an increase in wages.²⁷ Although large segments of Connecticut labor benefited from these increases, they accrued from the efforts of a small minority of the laborers in the establishments affected. Only about 11 percent of the total force employed in the 144 companies involved actually struck. The day had not yet come when the mass of laborers would unite for increased wages.²⁸

The wages earned were reduced by certain established practices which made the workingman virtually a slave to the credit system. By 1886, only about 10 percent of the establishments maintained a company store. These, with their attendant evils, were concentrated in the cotton and woolen industries in the Quinebaug and Shetucket valleys. A coupon system, in effect in some of these factories, all but bound the employee to trade at the store where he was forced to pay prices which

averaged six percent more than those in stores selling for cash. A further inroad was made on wages before they were received when the laborer resided in the factory's tenement. More than one-third of the factories reporting to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1886 maintained tenements to a "considerable extent" and one-half of the more than 400 reporting establishments provided some amount of housing. The laboring man of the nineteenth century was usually in debt and his creditors by law could instigate attachment proceedings which permitted the factoring of the debt over a period of time. In consequence, the laborer received scant cash earnings and his indebtedness, rather than being reduced, was simply transferred to another creditor. The evils of the credit system were generally recognized.²⁹

Once the objections of certain elements of the business community were overridden and the weekly payment of laborers required by law, it received general acceptance. The opponents of the plan, however, claimed that it was impracticable, did not justify the additional expense, and was not demanded by the better class of laborers. Further, it was argued that provision by legal requirement violated freedom of contract. Approximately 40 percent of the establishments in the state had begun paying their employees on a weekly basis by 1887 and their experience, as well as that of other states, supported the contentions for the practice.³⁰ In recognition of the possible hardship which such legislation might entail for small businesses, it was made applicable only to corporations.³¹ The law was backed strongly by public opinion and weekly payment of wages was instituted by many businesses not so compelled by law. By 1893, it was judged that the new system had increased the purchasing power of wages, had practically abolished the factorizing of wages, and had abolished the granting of commissions for advances between pay days. The proportion of establishments which furnished tenements as a part of their pay was decreasing gradually. Also, the number of companies which operated a company store and boarding houses was decreasing. The weekly payment plan was a success.³²

As the number of Connecticut citizens engaged in manufacturing increased a factory inspection system was introduced which provided supervision over "all buildings and places where machinery shall be used." The inspector was authorized to investigate the ventilation, the

water closets, and the safety of the machinery.³³ The effectiveness of the law was mitigated by its failure to require fire escapes and reports or investigation of industrial accidents. The law did provide a penalty of from \$50 to \$500 for failure to obey the directions of the inspector. In



(Courtesy "Meriden Record-Journal")

MERIDEN—FIRST HORSE-CAR TO COME THROUGH COLONY STREET.
(TAKEN FROM HOME BANK WINDOW, 1887)

1895, the maximum penalty was fixed at \$50, and any ruling of the factory inspector could be appealed to the superior court of the county.³⁴ Later, however, proprietors of workshops were again confronted by the original higher penalty for failure to provide a sanitary environment,³⁵ and gradually the inspection system apparently became more effective.

The labor organizations of the state ranged in 1888 in their political and social ideals from those of the Patrons of Husbandry to those of

the Socialist Labor Party. The former were concerned with farm labor and were described as being "full of hopes and full of life"; the latter stood for a complete social revolution. Ideologically, the Knights of Labor were closely aligned with the Socialists. The Federation of Labor attracted the largest number of workingmen. All of the labor groups advocated the establishment of postal savings banks, free coinage of silver, and arbitration of labor disputes. They opposed immigration and monopolies and suggested United States ownership of transportation and communication lines and state ownership of other utilities. A most interesting suggestion was one which would grant corporation charters to the highest bidder. The shades of disagreement varied among members of each organization and from group to group. As yet, organized labor lacked a singleness of purpose, but there was a growing conviction that permanent advantages would be achieved through legislation. Such legislative achievement had to be preceded by a reform of the election machinery.

To vote as one pleased without fear of recrimination became a cherished goal of the workingman. Many argued that the secrecy of the ballot was the most important objective of the working people. Too frequently employers had dictated the vote of their employees and in some cases went to the extreme of establishing a surveillance of the ballot boxes on election days. An effort was made in 1887 to curb bribery during elections. Witnesses were required to testify concerning bribes and were assured of the court's protection against recrimination. A general election law, designed to assure the secrecy of the ballot, was passed two years later.³⁸ It was recognized that the laboring classes had played an important part in the adoption of this and other legislation directed toward the improvement of election procedures.³⁹

The right of labor to organize was generally recognized by 1890. Most of the labor organizations within the state were conservative. In addition to supporting educational advance and to propagating the principle of arbitration, labor leaders were sometimes credited with having prevented strikes.⁴⁰ Efforts were being made by some industrial concerns to bridge the gap between capital and labor. The Danbury Hat Company formally recognized the permanency of trade unions in 1885 and entered into formal agreements for the amicable solution of

labor problems. The Yale and Towne Manufacturing Company of Stamford introduced a gain sharing plan. This was carefully distinguished from profit sharing and was designed to give the employee a share in the savings resulting from a higher degree of perfection of



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

PUTNAM

products to be attained by the care and good judgment exercised by the employee.⁴¹

Such cooperation with organized labor was not universal, however. Although concrete evidence was difficult to find, it was generally acknowledged that there existed among employers an informal agreement not to employ anyone who had been discharged by another employer or to hire those who left employment without their employer's consent. The extent to which such courtesy was practiced was a matter of conjecture, but that it prevailed was not doubted.⁴²

Labor suffered greatly in the Panic of 1893. The difficult period extended from the Summer of 1893 to the Fall of 1894, with the low point of the depression being reached in January and February 1894. In the major industries, the employees of the woolen factories suffered most. This industry paid during the depression period a monthly average wage which was only 61 percent of the average monthly wage in 1892. Other industries which operated at less than 70 percent of capacity were the cutlery, fire arms, machine building, carriage making, and silver. Some employees were discharged; others worked for reduced hours; and, in 50 percent of the establishments, employees worked at a reduced rate of pay. Wage cuts averaged about ten percent, while the gross average monthly wage was reduced about 25 percent.⁴³

During the period, opposition to a higher wage scale had stiffened and the view that capital was receiving a disproportionate share of the gross product was resolutely denounced in 1890. Any increase in wages was tied to profits.⁴⁴ Some establishments were slow to restore wage cuts. Some workers, the iron moulders at Russel & Erwin in New Britain, for example, struck to have their wages restored to the pre-panic level. The state was comparatively free from strikes, however. In 1895, when the greatest number of strikes since 1886 occurred, the loss in wages amounted to one million dollars, which represented only about two percent of the total amount of wages paid in the state. The losses to employers were negligible.⁴⁵

After the Panic, wages increased on the crest of a wave of prosperity which swept the state in the last years of the nineteenth century. The industrial revival started in 1896 and swept forward until 1900. The number of depositors in the savings banks increased. Production was up in the mill towns, as was employment. It was reported that some of the looms were idle for lack of employees. The average wage increased from 1898 to 1899 from \$420 to \$452 a year.⁴⁶

The improvement of economic status was accompanied by other significant gains for labor. The employment of child labor had declined gradually since 1880 and was now further restricted. It had come to be recognized that children had a claim on the state. It was also accepted that education must take precedence over the production which children could accomplish if citizens were to discharge their responsibilities

to the state. The age limit for the employment of children was raised to 14 in 1895. In 1899, regular attendance at school was required also of all those between 14 and 16 years of age who were not gainfully employed.⁴⁷ A state Board of Mediation was established in 1895,⁴⁸ and sympathy was developing for the establishment of a state employment office. Attention was being directed, too, toward the protection of the alien worker.⁴⁹

As European immigrants constituted a larger proportion of the working force, it became necessary to protect them from ruthless employers. It was usual for the wages of the immigrant laborer to be withheld and for him to be forced to purchase supplies at outlandish prices and to live in quarters unfit for human habitation, but for which he was charged an exorbitant rent. A flagrant example of these circumstances involved Italian laborers of the Bridgeport contractors, O'Brien, Sheehan, and McHale. The laborers were supplied by one Marino of Boston with the understanding that they were to purchase their supplies at the "Padronnes" where prices were 100 percent higher than market price. The workers paid \$25 a month for lodging in a barracks converted from a carriage shop and slept in plank bunks fitted with straw bags.⁵⁰ As soon as conditions were given publicity, an agent was appointed to investigate the matter. The barracks burned before he arrived, but assurances were given that the system would not be revived. A language difficulty made the Hungarian, Polish, and Italian immigrants the easy prey of unscrupulous employers. Special agents of the Bureau of Labor, each of whom had facility in one of the languages spoken by these minorities, were appointed to serve in the larger cities of the state. Pamphlets outlining the rights of labor under contract were written in the several languages and distributed to the immigrant laborers.⁵¹ A measure of justice was gained for the alien workers, even though it was extremely difficult to secure a conviction under the law.⁵²

By the end of the century the effectiveness of organized labor was evident. During the period from July 1, 1890 to December 31, 1900, there were 51 strikes reported. Of these, 18 were successful, 12 partially so, and 23 unsuccessful. There were 214 separate and distinct labor organizations in the state. These represented 50 different trades and were located in 34 towns and cities in the state.⁵³ Scant question was raised

any longer in regard to either the right of labor to organize or the wisdom of its doing so. Organized labor had reached a point from which it would be able, in the next century, to challenge the power of wealth and industry.

An adjustment to wealth and industry was required, too, of the Connecticut farmer. In Connecticut, the farmer had enjoyed a period of relative prosperity in the years immediately following the American Civil War. Then there was no serious competition from the West or the South. Agricultural machinery had come into general use in Connecticut before the war, and a state Board of Agriculture had been organized in 1866 to encourage agriculture, to investigate matters for its improvement, and to disseminate information for use by the farmers. Under these favorable conditions the total value of all farm products in Connecticut reached 145 million dollars in 1870. Agriculture continued to prosper until the Panic of 1873. At that time the exodus from the farm to the cities and to the West began.⁵⁴

It should not be construed that those who left the farms were poverty stricken. That there were many on the farms who had a strong bent for mechanics is easily understood in view of the close relationship between the farm and nascent industrialism during the first half of the century. It was reported that others of advanced years were attracted by the ease and convenience of life in the city.⁵⁵ In addition, there were still others, according to the Reverend William Clift, who had sufficient capital to take up a homestead or preempt a quarter section of government land and expected to make a better investment in the west than would be possible in Connecticut.⁵⁶

Those who remained on the farms derived certain benefits from the growth of the cities. These created greater markets for agricultural goods than the Connecticut farmer could supply. Also, he retained a unique advantage in his proximity to the cities, which was especially important in the marketing of perishable products. There were those who understood the relation of this market to the farmers' prosperity. R. S. Hinman, for example, warned that a sure way to destroy the farmer would be to paralyze the industries of the state or to reduce the wages of those engaged in non-agricultural pursuits. Speakers at agricultural meetings admonished farmers to continue to improve methods of

production and distribution and to take further advantage of these markets.⁵⁷

In fact, however, there was not sufficient capital available to speed the transition to the specialized farming which could meet urban de-



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

DANIELSON

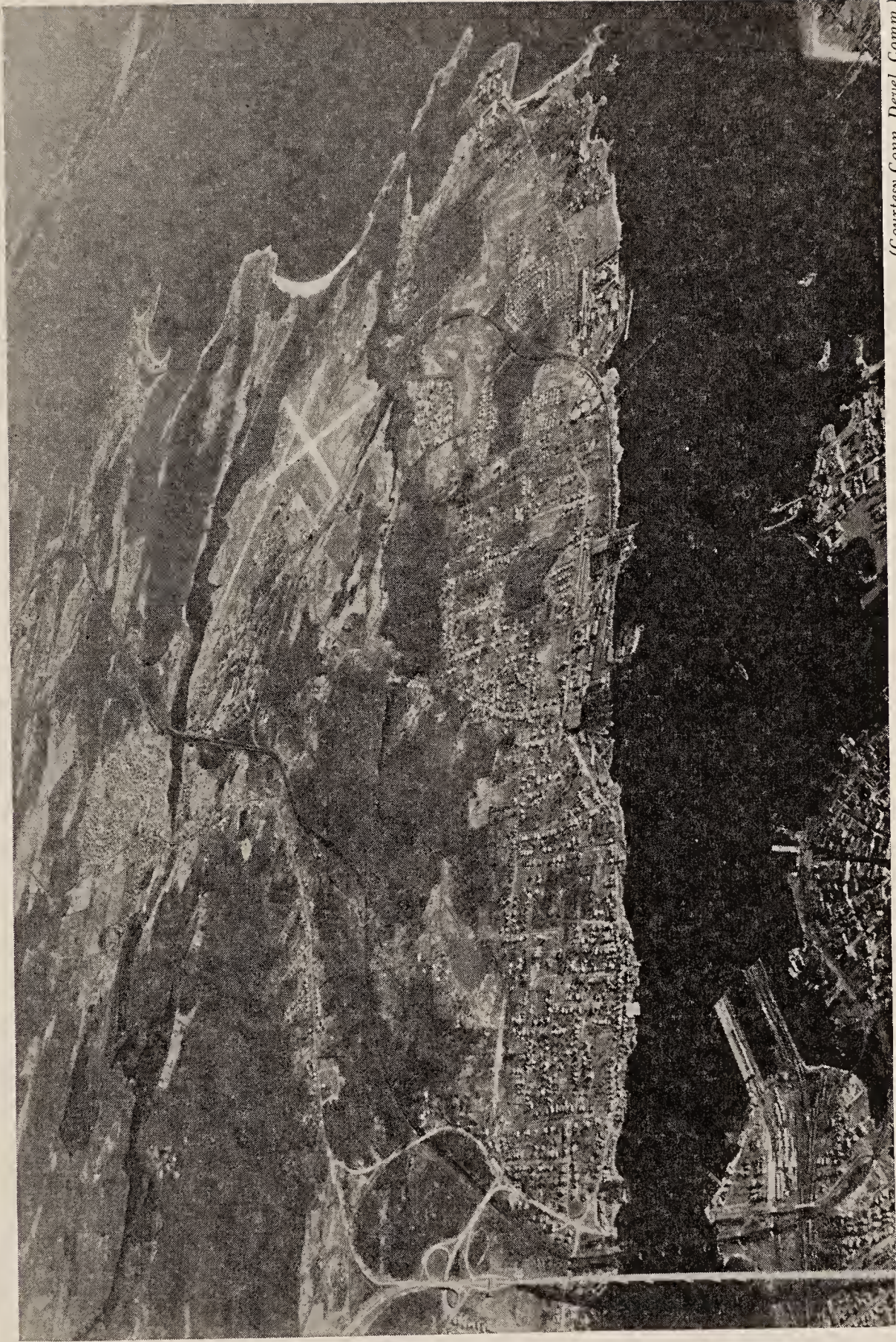
mands. By 1880, those with capital to invest had ceased to choose agriculture as the venture which would bring the greatest return. Although Connecticut was regarded as the richest state in the Union, much of its wealth was invested in railroads, in mines, and in mortgages upon real estate outside the state. The rates of interest on such investments ran from eight to twelve percent. Concurrently, except for the farms closest to the cities, investment in agriculture it was believed yielded no more than three percent. The amount invested in railroads alone in 1890 was two-thirds the whole amount invested in agriculture. Although markets remained relatively strong, the lack of capital to carry on the business

of farming had caused the value of farms to shrink markedly. Land, which once was regarded as the safest of investments, had come to be viewed as the most unstable of property.⁵⁸

The farmers themselves contributed to the condition. When they could lend money to their western competitors at eight or 12 percent, they would not hire labor to clear land or to cultivate it for an uncertain return. It was reported that the residents of a single town in rural Litchfield County gave evidence of western indebtedness in the amount of \$60,000. Upon the death of one capitalist, it was revealed that he had half of a million dollars invested in western enterprises. In consequence of such investments, locally roads were not built and real estate was not improved.⁵⁹

Only a partial remedy for the lack of capital was found in a system of tenant farming. The farm of William B. Hull of North Stonington, which, in 1881 had been in operation for 22 years, illustrates this system. The owner provided the farm, the tenant supplied the labor, and the two invested equally in the livestock which was the money crop. The tenant maintained the property and had use of a garden space and such other miscellany as had been agreed upon.⁶⁰ There were over 1200 such farms in the state in 1880. Tenant farming, however, did not become a lasting feature of Connecticut agriculture. By 1890, the number had decreased to 938, and, in 1900, there were only a few more than 500.⁶¹ The solemn fact facing the Connecticut farmer was that in the contest for the investment dollar, for markets, and for labor, agriculture continued to fall further behind industry. Yankee farmers were poorly equipped by temperament or by experience to stem the tide.

Those who remained to till Connecticut's soils were imbued with the conservatism and individualism of the region and failed to observe or were unwilling to admit that the status of agriculture demanded vigorous cooperative action. In a period when the leaders of wealth and industry called the tune for men in public office, agricultural leaders eschewed political action and warned farmers against being identified as a special class.⁶² Attempts to develop farmers' cooperatives were at best only partially successful. Efforts to promote scientific agriculture were frequently obstructed by "the men in the back towns who understood the value of money, but not of science."⁶³ In the years immedi-



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

GROTON—PHOTO TAKEN AT 10,000 FEET, WITH NEW LONDON IN FOREGROUND

ately following the Civil War, farmers organized only for social intercourse and human betterment, and efforts, made toward the end of the century, to alter these original objectives were bitterly denounced.⁶⁴

Farm organizations devoted themselves almost exclusively to lessening the social and cultural lag which was likely to result from the isolation and independence of farm life. Farmers it was believed tended to neglect their social opportunities and were "apt to become impressed with the idea that they were not fit for society."⁶⁵ The Farm Club was an organization which attempted to overcome such feelings by meeting the farmers' wants as a social being, improving his powers of conversation, extending to him a knowledge of the wants and problems of others, and giving him a pride in his calling. The clubs were eminently democratic. In them all stood on the same social level: all were teachers, all were learners. Farm clubs grew slowly after the first club was organized in Middletown in 1842 and did not reach the height of their effectiveness until the eighteen eighties. Many of the objectives of the Farm Clubs were absorbed by the agricultural Granges. Then, by the end of the century, the chief function of these had come to be the holding of an annual fair. Evaluation of the importance of these groups can not be made by count of legislative enactments reflecting their influence. They may have promoted certain intangibles which provide strength to a democratic society. Nonetheless, the fact remains that the agricultural organizations accomplished little of immediate value to the farmer in his economic struggle in the nineteenth century.⁶⁶

In an effort to correct the developing imbalance between agriculture and industry, agrarian leaders gave greater attention to scientific agriculture. The impetus for much of this interest came from the state Board of Agriculture organized in 1866. The Board consisted of the Governor and one representative from each county. The latter were appointed by the Agricultural Society, which was begun in 1854 and represented the first and only sustained interest of a group in the state in the dissemination of knowledge of agricultural science.⁶⁷ The Board investigated problems of importance to agriculture, inquired into the methods of practical husbandry, quarantined cattle, and distributed information prepared by leading experts on agriculture in the state.⁶⁸

There was, however, a paucity of scientific information. To supply

this the Board, with the Agricultural Society, petitioned the Assembly in 1875 to establish an experimental station in Connecticut. The opposition to the proposal came from the farmers in the legislature who reacted cautiously to any proposal which would increase taxes. Their opposition was overcome by an offer from Mr. Orange Judd, of the *American Agriculturist* of \$1,000. and the offer from Wesleyan University of the free use of its laboratories on the condition that the legislature would grant \$2,800 a year for two years. The first agricultural experiment station in the United States was begun in 1875. The two years of experience proved the value of the station and in 1887 it was placed on a permanent basis. Until land and buildings were supplied in 1887, the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale provided free use of its laboratories. The station devoted itself in its first years to determining the proper use of fertilizers on the various soils of the state and the proper feeding of livestock.⁶⁹ The hesitation of the farmers to vote funds for agricultural experimentation emphasized their lack of conviction of the practical importance of scientific information. To achieve application of new methodology, it was necessary to train the farmers.

A school for the education of Connecticut citizens in the application of scientific agricultural principles was a necessary development. When the Morrill Act was passed in 1862, Yale was the only institution in the state capable of using the annual grant of approximately \$6,000. forthcoming from the national government under the new legislation. The Agricultural and Mechanical College of the State was thereby established in conjunction with the Sheffield Scientific School. It appears, however, that neither the college nor the state pursued energetically the responsibilities implicit in the grant. The state made no additional financial grants to the college and it was charged that Yale had graduated only seven students in agriculture in 24 years.⁷⁰

Little had been accomplished by 1880 under the existing arrangement and sentiment had developed for a separate agricultural college. In 1881, the state accepted 170 acres of land and \$5,000. from Augustus and Charles Storrs for the establishment of a school.⁷¹ As the school struggled through its first years a class consciousness was developing among American farmers, which included a sanction of schools especially for farmers' sons. Immediately after the Connecticut Grange was

permanently established in 1885, it endorsed the college at Storrs. The Masters of the state Grange objected to the fact that entrance requirements at Yale were such as to bar Connecticut farm boys from entrance and led the fight against classical education in general. The opposition to Yale was brought to a head in 1887 by the passage of the Hatch Act by the national government. This increased the annual grant of the Federal government to \$15,000. Yale was foiled in its attempt to secure the whole of the amount for the experiment station when it was agreed to grant half of the amount to the station and half to Storrs. The grant awakened interest in the possibility of establishing a land grant college in which case the grant could increase to \$25,000 a year. This prompted the Assembly to vote to transfer the whole of the government funds to Storrs. Yale was unwilling to forego this largess and secured a restraining order denying Storrs the use of the money. Under a final settlement, reached in 1893, Yale was granted damages of \$154,604, but the last ties of Yale to the state were severed as Yale ceased to accept state nominated students.⁷² The basis was finally being laid for an agricultural college.

The farmer, however, continued to be beset by a decline in his relative economic position. The farm cooperatives, which had early been envisaged as a possible partial answer to the farmer's problems failed. On occasion, the farm clubs had purchased articles, such as seed and fruit trees, cooperatively, and, in 1879, the Secretary of the state Board of Agriculture pointed to the purchase of farm implements and machinery as legitimate fields of cooperation.⁷³ These efforts had resulted in scant success. When the first state Grange was organized in Danbury in 1875, its members resolved not to carry on a war with private or public corporations, but they invited wholesale dealers in articles of general use and consumption to correspond with their chapters in regard to the supply of needed supplies.⁷⁴ Although potentially the Grange, as was recognized by individuals, could have controlled the crop and the prices of agricultural products if every farmer were a member, if the Masters of every state Grange met monthly and achieved as complete an organization as that of the manufacturers,⁷⁵ the Grange actually was torn by divisive forces before the end of the century. The Grange never proved very successful in securing cooperation.⁷⁶



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

MIDDLEFIELD—JOHN LYMAN ORCHARDS

In contrast to other sections of the country, the Connecticut Grange never assumed the status of a distinct political party. A factor in the explanation of this difference may have been the conservatism of Connecticut's rural population. Also, the dichotomy between the interests of the farmer and the industrialist was less great in Connecticut than elsewhere. Freight rates, for example, were not so high in the state.⁷⁷ Then, too, some of the farmers of Connecticut had invested in industrial stocks. Agricultural leaders, during the Populist uprisings of

the 1890's denounced politicians who referred to the farmers as a class and warned inevitably, if such a class were to develop, it would constitute a peasantry, at least in the minds of the urban populace.⁷⁸

It is not apparent that the Connecticut farmer actively assumed personal or collective responsibility for the maintenance of the agrarian sphere of interest within the new society dominated by finance and oriented to industry. In the absence of concrete proposals pushed to fruition, it is difficult to distinguish the immediate practical benefits derived from farmers' organizations. There is little question that the fraternal and social gatherings, the intellectual discussions, and the formal education made an ultimate contribution. In the nineteenth century, the course of the adaptation of Connecticut agriculture to the needs of the time seems to have been determined more by force of circumstance than by force of intellect, the will to cooperate, or the impulse to political action.

Modification was forced, nonetheless, upon the agricultural production of the state. The character of the Connecticut dairy industry, for example, changed. The cheese and butter industry had moved west as western lands were opened. The production of cheese had decreased from almost 4,000,000 pounds in 1850 to slightly over 100,000 pounds in 1890, and butter production had been cut in half.⁷⁹ Yet, as the population of the cities continued to increase, the Connecticut farmer found an ever increasing market for fresh milk. Whereas in 1860, practically no fresh milk was sold, by 1890 almost 60 million gallons were sold.⁸⁰ To meet this demand, dairy herds, which had consisted largely of the Ayrshire, Guernseys, and Jerseys, were supplemented by the more productive Holstein.⁸¹ There were four inventions which contributed significantly to making the expansion of milk production possible. These were the silo, which gave a supply of green feed throughout the winter; the milking machine and the corn harvester, which reduced the labor requirement; and the Babcock test, which enabled a determination of the amount of butter fat in milk.⁸² The pattern of the Connecticut dairy industry had been fashioned. After 1900, about three-fourths of all the milk produced in the state was sold fresh, and it became the only profitable branch of the industry. The shipping stations for fresh milk replaced the creamery, and the Connecticut Dairymen's Associa-



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

ROXBURY—VILLAGE SCENE

tion, organized in 1889, replaced the cooperative creameries, which had been an early phase of the agricultural cooperatives organized 20 years previously.⁸³

Further evidence of Connecticut's adjustment to the demands of the cities and western competition is found in the expansion of truck farming, fruit growing, and egg production. The perishable products of the farm and garden offered lucrative profits.⁸⁴ Until 1885, New England supplied the New York market, practically without competition

from the Southern states.⁸⁵ The value of vegetables and small fruits, such as strawberries, sold in the state increased from \$385,000 in 1879 to approximately \$1,250,000 in 1899.⁸⁶ During the same period, orchard products increased from a total dollar volume of \$456,246 in 1879 to over a million dollars in 1899.⁸⁷ Reports on egg production were not recorded until 1880, but during the last twenty years of the century, the sales increased from 5,209,061 to almost 8,000,000 dozen in 1899.⁸⁸

In tobacco cultivation, there was a transition from outdoor to shadegrown which established a cash crop during the decades to come and which ultimately illustrated an application of industrial techniques to an agricultural process. The "shoestring tobacco," grown since colonial times in limited quantities, had been replaced in the third decade of the nineteenth century by the broadleaf strain which was better suited to cigar making. Production of this tobacco reached a peak in 1880 when over 14,000,000 pounds were produced. This excessive production and the importation of the finer, lighter Sumatra strain severely imperiled the Connecticut industry.⁸⁹ A tariff of 75 cents a pound was levied in 1885 and raised to two dollars a pound in 1890. Even so, the United States was sending from five to six million dollars yearly to Sumatra for cigar leaf tobacco.⁹⁰ The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station apparently experimented with the growing of shade tobacco as early as 1890, but the results were not wholly satisfactory.⁹¹ When the United States Department of Agriculture developed a strain comparable to the Sumatra, soil tests were made in the Connecticut Valley in 1899. In cooperation with the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, one-third of an acre of the new strain was grown under a shed. The next year, 13 farmers in the Valley planted a total of 41 acres.⁹² The experiment proved a success, although the market seemed uncertain in the beginning. Production increased gradually after 1902, and shade grown tobacco was to become a major item in the gross agricultural product of the state.⁹³

In consequence of the new relationship of agriculture to the rest of the state's economy and of the new specialization of agricultural production there was a reduction in both the total number of acres under cultivation and the average size of the small farm. The abandoned farm was a most obvious adjustment to the new industrialization. As the term

was used at the time and as accepted by Professor Shannon, it referred to land formerly maintained and cultivated, but no longer occupied and falling into decay.⁹⁴ In the years from 1860 to 1900, farm acreage was reduced only slightly from 2,504,204 to 2,312,088 acres. However, in 1860, only 26.9 percent of the land was identified as unimproved, while in 1900, 54 percent fell into this classification. While farm acreage declined and improved farm land was reduced even more, the number of farms increased from 25,180 to 26,948. Also, this increase in the number of farms came even though the number of farms of over 1,000 acres increased from 39 to 187. Thus, not only was the average size of the farm decreased, but, with the farms of over 1,000 acres eliminated from each calculation, the size of the small farm fell even more sharply. It may be in part that the nature of the new specialization operated to cause more intensive farming of smaller areas. The extent to which the small farms were cultivated only to the extent necessary for the family's subsistence rather than in an attempt to produce surpluses is not evident. That some of the land was being held for speculative purposes is suggested by the increase in the number of large tracts. Although in fact many acres of New England farm land had been made unproductive through mismanagement, others should have been abandoned. It was reported, for example, that one farm was so full of rocks and boulders that it was doubtful if a continuous furrow of five feet in length could be turned. While theoreticians lamented the baneful effects of the abandoned farm, others viewed it as a blessing that state citizens were "not compelled to wrestle with her rocky hillside and worn out fields."⁹⁶ Too, the active farmer understood the advantage of having farm land sold to those who would not till it rather than to be continued or reclaimed for competitive production.⁹⁷ In addition to speculators, a number of professional and business people purchased farms for dwellings to escape the noise and bustle of the city and let the land lie fallow. The turnover of this land was relatively high as successive generations of urban dwellers were lured by the picturesqueness of Connecticut hillsides, then tired of coping with the distances from schools or lack of cultural opportunities, and retreated to the conveniences of the city.⁹⁸

An additional factor in the adjustment of all facets of economic

activity to the growing power of wealth and industry was the number of immigrants who settled within Connecticut borders. These immigrants brought skills and manpower for the rapidly expanding industries, settled abandoned farm lands, and supplemented the population of the state at a time when the native stock was being attracted to the greater opportunities believed to exist in Western America. The immigrants became pawns in the contests for political control and dupes of unprincipled employers. As they filled the cities and took up their homesteads, the cultural homogeneity of the Yankee community was altered significantly and its racial homogeneity destroyed.

The population of the state almost doubled in the years after the American Civil War, and its composition changed drastically.⁹⁹ In 1860 the state's residents numbered 460,147; in 1870, 537,454; and in 1900, over 900,000.¹⁰⁰ As late as 1850, 87 percent of the population was native born. This percentage was reduced by 1879 to approximately 79 percent and by the end of the century to 74 percent. The foreign born totaled 238,210 and included more than 30 nationalities.¹⁰¹ The native born included, of course, a number born of foreign parents. A more accurate index to the diversification of the Connecticut population is suggested in the more than 500,000, or 45 percent, of the residents of the state, who had at least one parent of foreign birth.¹⁰² The influx of these aliens has been explained in part by the practice of American industries of contracting for laborers from foreign countries and of importing them to this country to provide the needed labor supply and to keep down labor costs.¹⁰³

The agency which, presumably, was to perform this service, the American Emigrant Company, emerged from two separate organizations with identifiable Connecticut representation. A group of Hartford business men had organized, in 1863, a company to encourage immigration, primarily with a view of disposing of the company's Iowa lands. By their business, social, and political connections, however, they were closely connected to the iron and hardware manufacturers, such as Russell and Erwin of New Britain, who were then seeking to raise funds for the stimulation of immigration. The two groups combined their efforts under the name of the American Emigrant Company and secured the signatures of 185 manufacturers, including 72 from Hartford,



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

MANCHESTER—SHOWING WIDE MAIN STREET

urging the government to appropriate funds for the encouragement of immigration.¹⁰⁴

The law passed by Congress in 1864 fell far short of the hopes of its proponents. The manufacturers, who had scaled their original request to the government from three millions to one million secured only \$25,000 for the administrative expenses for an Office of a Commissioner of Immigration and for an United States Immigration Officer in the Port of New York. Congress rejected all proposals to assist in pay-

ing for passages by government funds. The bill did, however, validate such labor contracts in the courts and provided that unfilled contracts could serve as a lien upon future land acquired by the immigrant.¹⁰⁵

This was not sufficient support to assure the success of the American Emigrant Company. It was quickly learned that the new immigrant was much more likely to leave his employment for a more favorable job than he was to take up western lands. The lien upon the land, therefore, was held to be insufficient security against violation of a contract by an immigrant.¹⁰⁶ Although the Connecticut Assembly extended to employers the power to enforce their contracts through Connecticut courts, the United States Congress rejected repeated efforts for legislation which would authorize the impounding of wages to enforce the contract.¹⁰⁷ The Company was rebuffed for one reason or another in Europe, but was apparently successful "in bringing out a large number of Scandinavians under its care." As stories drifted back to Sweden of the disappointments of those who failed to find jobs in America, would-be immigrants were warned that they could not depend upon the Company. When business slackened in the post-war period, the need for immigrant workers lessened and the Act to Encourage Immigration was repealed.¹⁰⁸ Charlotte Erickson, in a careful analysis of American industry and the immigrant, concludes that "contract labor was rare in America during the years after the Civil War, and never reached the proportion claimed by the advocates of a law against its importation."¹⁰⁹ There were others, however, such as the steamship companies, the railroads, the commission men, and, on occasion, the consular representatives in the several countries, who advertised the opportunities in America. Sometimes, too, business relationships, such as those between the cutlery interests in Connecticut and in Sheffield or those between the textile mills of New England and of Lancashire, operated to encourage immigration to America. These contributed to the continuous flow of immigrants who swelled the numbers of those of foreign birth who had come to reside in Connecticut before the Civil War.

The Irish, who were already numerous before the Civil War, remained the largest alien element in Connecticut's population during the remainder of the century. During the last three decades of the century, approximately 70,000 foreign born Irish in the state. They

flocked to the burgeoning urban centers to fill the industrial jobs available there.¹¹⁰ Not only were they the largest element among the foreign born, but also they constituted a substantial proportion of the total population in the five largest cities. At the end of the century, they represented 13 percent of the total population in Waterbury, 10 percent in Hartford, 10 percent in New Haven, eight percent in Bridgeport, and seven percent in New Britain.¹¹¹ This numerical strength did not operate to accelerate their acceptance of the Connecticut Yankee or his acceptance of them.

The Irish were long the most disliked of the immigrant groups. Their adjustment was made more complex by the demands of industry and by the need they felt to preserve Catholicism against the onslaughts of Protestantism.¹¹² Their schools, churches, and convents aroused much suspicion and accusations that they contributed more than their share of criminals were frequent.¹¹³ Subsequently in their relations with other aliens, they occupied a paradoxical position. On the one hand they assisted the new immigrants in adjustment to America, impressing upon the new immigrant the Irish conception of American life. The Irish foreman, the Irish schoolteacher, the Irish politician, and the Irish priest had great influence on first and second generations of Southern Europeans, and the assumption by the Irish of leadership in the Roman Catholic Church cannot be overemphasized. On the other hand, on occasions the Irish were the oppressors of the newcomers, as in their attack on the Jews of Stamford.¹¹⁴

By the end of the century, the process of the assimilation of the Irish had begun. There were only 4,919 persons in Connecticut in 1880 with Irish fathers and native mothers while there were 82,952 whose parents were both Irish.¹¹⁵ The number of persons in the state with native mothers and Irish fathers had increased to 14,483 by 1900 and those with both parents of Irish descent had decreased to 72,774.¹¹⁶ Despite this, the Irish exercised pressure on Connecticut culture only in the field of politics where their numbers enabled them to exercise some influence. As they sought to make the adjustments to the demands of industry and as members of the laboring class, they usually became identified with the Democratic Party. Often they were the victims of unfulfilled pledges,¹¹⁷ but ultimately it was through their exercise of

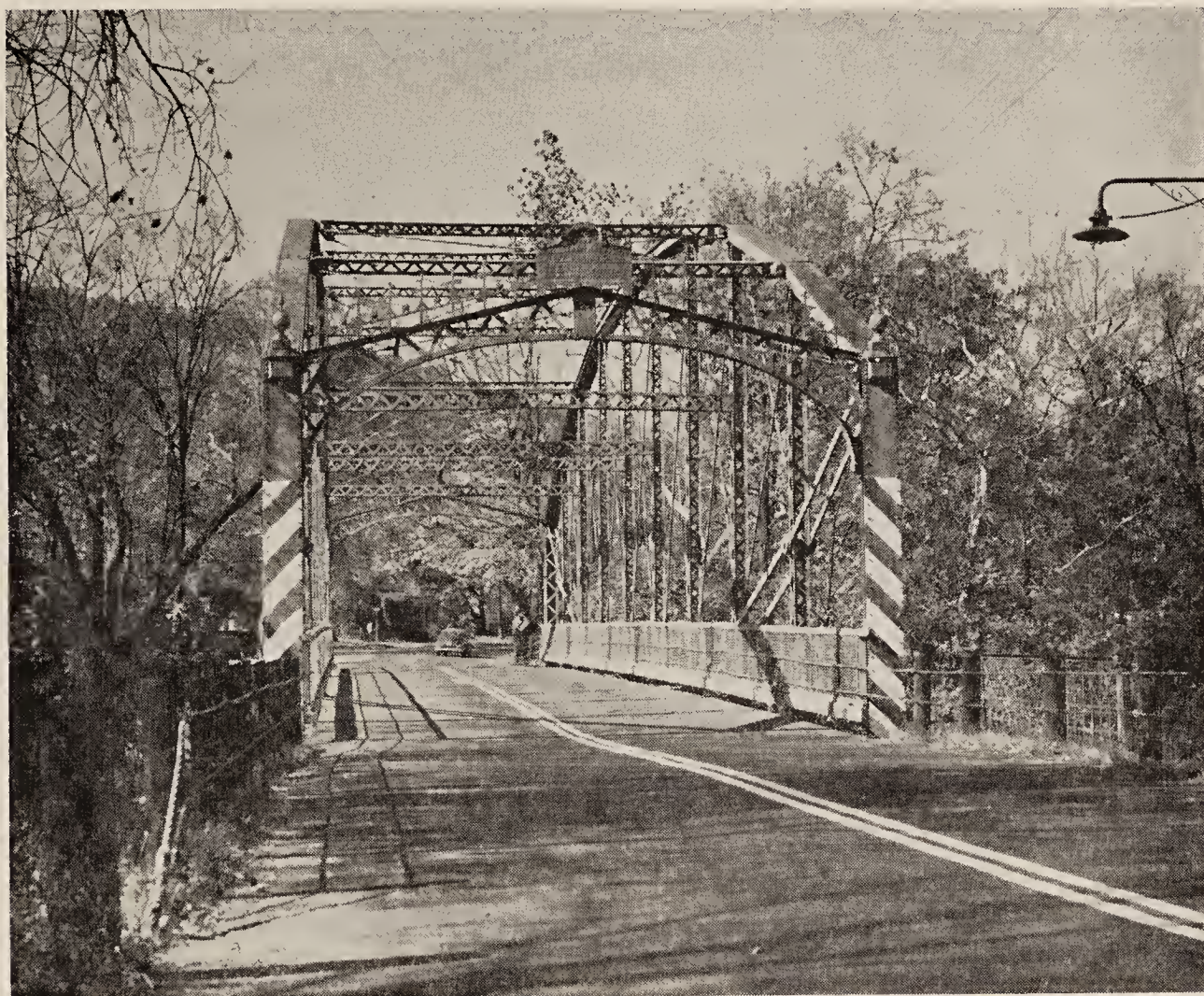
the franchise that they and other immigrants influenced Connecticut life.

Other English speaking peoples came in large numbers in the years immediately following the war. The foreign born English in the state increased to approximately 13,000 by 1870 and by 1900 reached about 22,000, a level which was maintained throughout the first decade of the twentieth century. Over 3,000 Scotsmen lived in Connecticut in 1870, and by 1900 their numbers increased to over 6,000. These peoples were fairly evenly divided between the cities and the small towns and the urban dwellers were evenly distributed among the large cities. English and Scottish immigrants fitted more easily into the Yankee culture: they faced no language barrier and their religion did not arouse suspicion.¹¹⁸

Concurrently with the English immigrants, the French Canadians began entering the state in large numbers in the years immediately after the Civil War. The volume of the migration varied with economic conditions, dropping off during the six years of stagnation following 1873.¹¹⁹ The flow was again resumed with the improvement of economic conditions in 1879 and reached a high point in 1890-91.¹²⁰ By 1900 there were 37,000 persons of French Canadian parentage. They shunned the larger cities and flocked to the textile mills of Eastern Connecticut, drawn by the need of the mills and by the persuasiveness of recruiting agents. The French Canadian gradually replaced the English and the Irish, who a few years before had supplanted the native workmen, in the more skilled activities of the textile industry.¹²¹ By the end of the century, more than 7,500 foreign born French Canadians, or 40 percent of the total in the state, were concentrated in Windham County.¹²² At first this group had come as migratory workers, appearing when there were job opportunities and returning home when there were not. The textile mills employed women and children as well as men and encouraged the migration of family units. The migrant workers were transformed into permanent residents of Connecticut.¹²³

In the midst of a Yankee dominated culture, the French Canadians maintained century-old folkways. They brought to Connecticut the same sense of nationalism which had enabled them to forestall the Anglo-Canadians. The French Canadian established Catholic churches, imported priests trained in Canada, organized French clubs, and at-

tempted to preserve the French language. The last was perhaps the greatest deterrent to Americanization and apparently became both reason and excuse for ignoring such laws as those requiring school attend-



(Courtesy Mills Coll., Conn. State Lib.)

UNIONVILLE—RICHARDS' BRIDGE OVER FARMINGTON RIVER.
BUILT IN 1895, IT WAS WASHED OUT IN FLOOD OF AUGUST 19, 1955

ance. Since there was much employment of French Canadian children in the mills, school laws were printed in French and widely circulated and posted in factories.¹²⁴ In Putnam a French speaking teacher was employed for the benefit of this immigrant group.¹²⁵ Gradually the French Canadians developed a new kind of nationalism, which, Professor Hansen suggests, was tinged with Americanism. It seemed motivated by the desire of this minority to gain recognition.¹²⁶

The only other group which came to Connecticut in significant

numbers before 1880 was the German. Compulsory military duty, rising taxes, and crop failures were among the conditions at home which motivated the Germans to leave. By 1870 more than 12,000 foreign born Germans resided in Connecticut.¹²⁷ There was a noticeable slackening of this immigration following the Panic of 1873, and the fact that many returned to Germany at this time evoked some caustic criticism.¹²⁸ After the depression, the influx again increased until by 1900 there were almost 32,000 foreign born Germans in the state. Approximately one-third of these were located in the five largest cities of the state. The remainder was rather evenly distributed throughout the rest of the state.¹²⁹

Except for the problem of language, the Germans easily became a part of the Connecticut scene. They were generally well off when they came, and included, perhaps, a larger proportion of skilled and professional men than did other immigrant groups. The German immigrant was described as reliable, philosophical, patient, and desiring "to possess a home and a family, to master some minute mechanical or technical detail, and to take his leisure and his amusements in his own customary way."¹³⁰ Efforts to alleviate the language difficulty were made by establishing language classes in the schools of the larger cities.¹³¹ The Germans, perhaps, to a greater extent than any of the old immigrant groups, with the possible exception of the English, fitted into the needs of the rapidly developing industrial society of Connecticut.¹³²

After 1880 the nationality distribution of immigrants changed. From before the Civil War until 1880, the German, Irish, French Canadian, and English comprised the most numerous of the immigrant groups coming to Connecticut. This earlier pattern of immigration was altered after 1880 first by an influx of Scandinavian, and particularly Swedish, immigrants. The Danes and Norwegians began coming into the state in considerable numbers in the latter part of the seventies. However, by the end of the century, the foreign born of this extraction in the state numbered only 2,000.¹³³ The Swedish immigrants were significantly more numerous. The period of greatest influx occurred between 1880 and 1890. By the latter date, there were approximately 10,000 in the state. Ten years later the number had increased to 16,000. In 1900, approximately half of the Swedish immigrants were located in the five larger cities where they were concentrated in factory work and

in building trades.¹³⁴ In the latter they were utilizing a talent developed in their native country, as they did when then turned to the development of nurseries. A. N. Pierson, who settled in Cromwell in 1870, began what was to become the largest underglass greenhouse in the country.¹³⁵ The Norwegians were similar to the Swedes in their economic pursuits, while many of the Danes became highly skilled mechanics and tool makers. Others turned to dairying and truck farming. The native background of the Scandinavians was similar to the Connecticut heritage and the Scandinavians were easily assimilated and suffered little discrimination.¹³⁶

The Italians, of whom the residents in the state became acutely aware in the last decade of the century, did face discrimination. Whether because of fear of persecution, as has been claimed, or because of the transitory nature of the first of these immigrants, they were not identified in large numbers until 1890. Then, 5,000 foreign-born Italians were reported in the state. More than 25 percent of these resided in the city of New Haven. The others were evenly distributed among the cities of Waterbury, Bridgeport, and Hartford. They aroused suspicion and were subjected to the discriminations suffered by earlier groups.¹³⁷ Near the end of the century, the General Assembly took steps to assure the Italians and other immigrants with language difficulties of their right of contract and of the protection of that right under the laws of the state. The Catholic Church and such other organizations as the Connecticut Missionary Society and the Italian Baptist Mission assisted the newcomer to adjust to Connecticut life.¹³⁹ Many turned from the problems of the cities, took advantage of the status of agriculture in the state and moved to rural communities.

The Italian provided the energy and the knowledge necessary to transform many of Connecticut's marginal abandoned farms into profitable enterprises. There were those who believed that "the best of the old stock" of the small towns had moved West and that the immigrant was a necessary replacement.¹⁴⁰ It was suggested that the immigrant with a large family was the hope of the decaying small towns of Connecticut.¹⁴¹ Certain Italians recognized the potentialities of the land near New Haven, acquired it cheaply, and transformed it into a productive enterprise which decreased the dependence of New Haven on New York



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

MIDDLETOWN

markets.¹⁴² In the Glastonbury area, another group of approximately 50 families established profitable orchards on sterile and well-worn land.¹⁴³

Other nationalities which immigrated in significant numbers before the turn of the century included the Russians, Hungarians, and Austrians. The Russians began to come in the decade from 1880 to 1890, and by 1900 they numbered 11,000. There were 3,100 Russians in New Haven and another 2,200 in Hartford.¹⁴⁴ The Austrians and Hungarians, in about equal proportion, comprised another 11,000 immigrants.

Not until the twentieth century did other immigrant groups appear in significant numbers, including the Lithuanians, Czechs, Slovaks, Greeks, and Poles. The Poles, however, began to arrive as early as 1880.

The adjustments of Connecticut society in the last part of the nineteenth century provide in small compass a view of the accommodations of the peoples of the world to the demands of the scientific advances which stimulated, accompanied, and resulted from the industrial revolution. Connecticut in the years immediately following the Civil War occupied something of a half way point in this process of industrialization in the remaining decades of the century. Corporate industry grew to maturity, a transportation system was perfected, and capital became more fluid and to an increasing extent looked beyond the state's borders for returns. In the western states, where industrialization was only beginning, there remained undeveloped land capable of producing foodstuffs in quantity and at a price with which Connecticut farmers could not compete. Many left their family farms and established new homesteads in the West. Others swelled the growing labor classes in the industrial centers. The labor needs of the expanding industries, however, exceeded the available numbers from the native population. Meanwhile, residents of other states and peoples of other lands were making similar adjustments to the technical, industrial advances. Some came to Connecticut and supplemented the native labor force. A smaller number settled in the rural areas of the state and helped to resuscitate and adapt Connecticut agriculture to the demands of an industrial civilization. In the process, the independence of the Connecticut yeoman was considerably lessened and the homogeneity of the people de-

stroyed. There emerged an urban civilization which required the cooperative efforts of society.

NOTES—CHAPTER XXVII

- ¹ Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 500-515.
- ² *Ibid.*
- ³ *Ibid.*, pp. 516-32.
- ⁴ Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1875, pp. 10-12, Public Documents, 1875; Report of Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1884, p. 24, Public Documents, 1884, Vol. II; Niven, "Time of the Whirlwind," pp. 536-39.
- ⁵ Governor's Message, 1875, pp. 14-15, Public Documents, 1875.
- ⁶ Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1875, pp. 19-20, Public Documents, 1875.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.
- ⁹ Public Acts, 1875, p. 44.
- ¹⁰ Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1875, pp. 3-16, Public Documents, .
- ¹¹ Report of the Board of Education, 1877, p. 6, Public Documents, .
- ¹² Public Acts, 1882, pp. 162-63.
- ¹³ Public Acts, 1886, pp. xix, xx; Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1886, pp. xvi-xxi, Public Documents, 1887, Vol. I.
- ¹⁴ Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1893, pp. 19-20, Public Documents, 1884, Vol. II.
- ¹⁵ Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1893, p. 10, Public Documents, .
- ¹⁶ Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1889, p. 14, Public Documents, 1890, Vol. II; *Ibid.*, 1890, p. 28, Public Documents, 1891, Vol. II.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1893, p. 138, Public Documents, 1894, Vol. I.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1887, pp. 19-20, Public Documents, 1888, Vol. II.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- ²² *Ibid.*, 1886, p. xviii.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 1887, pp.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 385-91.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 308.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 387-88.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 387.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1886, pp. ix-lx.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*
- ³¹ Public Acts, 1887, p. 696.
- ³² Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1889, pp. 55-57.
- ³³ Public Acts, 1887, pp. 763-65.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1895, pp. 559-60.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 1899, pp. 1109-10.
- ³⁸ Public Acts, 1787, p. 725; *ibid.*, 1789, pp. 155-59.
- ³⁹ Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1889, p. 16, Public Documents, 1889, Vol. II.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 1887, pp. 15-17; *ibid.*, 1890, pp. 16-17.

- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-23.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 1894, Public Documents, 1895, Vol. II, pp. 167-284.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1890, pp. 13-14; *ibid.*, 1893, pp. 20-24.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 1895, pp. 197-210.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 1899, Public Documents, 1899, Vol. III, pp. 12-13; *ibid.*, 1900, Public Documents, 1900, Vol. II, pp. 8-9.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 1893, pp. 178-82, 193; Public Acts, 1893, p. 377; *ibid.*, 1899, p. 995, 1006-1007.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1895, pp. 584-85.
- ⁴⁹ Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1899, pp. 172-74; *ibid.*, 1900, pp. 164-65.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 221.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 1895, pp. 11-12; *ibid.*, 1896, Public Documents, 1897, Vol. III, pp. 12-13; Public Acts, 1895, pp. 638-39.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, Report of Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1897, p. 11.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 173-74; *ibid.*, 1900, p. 174.
- ⁵⁴ Jenkins, "Connecticut Agriculture," in Osborn, *History of Connecticut*, pp. 385-88, 410-12; Tenth Census of the United States, pp. 3-19; Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the Connecticut Board of Agriculture, 1890 (Hartford, 1891), pp. 160-61.
- ⁵⁵ Fourteenth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Connecticut Board of Agriculture, 1880-81 (Hartford, 1881), p. 223.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 219-21.
- ⁵⁸ Fourteenth Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, pp. 225-32; Twenty-Fourth Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, 1896 (Hartford 1897), pp. 157-74.
- ⁵⁹ Thirtieth Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, 1896 (Hartford, 1897), pp. 70-71.
- ⁶⁰ Fourteenth Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, pp. 233-35.
- ⁶¹ Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Census of the United States, 1880, 1890, and 1900, Agriculture.
- ⁶² Twenty-Fourth Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, p. 163.
- ⁶³ Twenty-First Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, 1887 (Hartford, 1887), p. 103; Jenkins, "Connecticut Agriculture," pp. 384-85.
- ⁶⁴ *The Connecticut Granges*, edited under the supervision of a Committee of the State Granges (New Haven, 1900), p. xiii.
- ⁶⁵ Fourteenth Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, p. 36.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 35-39.
- ⁶⁷ Jenkins, "Connecticut Agriculture," pp. 356-59; Walter Stemmons, *Connecticut Agricultural College, A History* (Storrs, 1931), p. 22.
- ⁶⁸ Jenkins, "Connecticut Agriculture," pp. 360-61.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 375-80; Twenty-First Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, pp. 99-107.
- ⁷⁰ Jenkins, "Connecticut Agriculture," pp. 368-70; Stemmons, *Connecticut Agricultural College*, pp. 64-66.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-33.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 56-70.
- ⁷³ Twelfth Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, 1878-79 (Hartford, 1879), p. 38.
- ⁷⁴ *The Connecticut Granges*, p. 9.
- ⁷⁵ Twenty-First Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, pp. 218-19.
- ⁷⁶ *The Connecticut Granges*, p. xii; Jenkins, "Connecticut Agriculture," p. 384.
- ⁷⁷ Shannon, *Farmer's Last Frontier*, pp. 291-303.
- ⁷⁸ Twenty-fourth Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, p. 163; Twenty-eighth Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, 1894 (Hartford, 1895), p. 58.

- ⁷⁹ Richard F. Hogan, "Abandonment of Agricultural Lands in the Uplands of Western New England" (Doctoral thesis, Division of Geological Sciences, Harvard University, 1949), pp. 144-46; Twelfth Census, 1900, Agriculture, p. 593.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁸¹ Jenkins, "Connecticut Agriculture," pp. 393-94.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 398-99.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 361, 396-99.
- ⁸⁴ Fourteenth Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, p. 223; Jenkins, "Connecticut Agriculture," p. 410.
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁶ Tenth Census, Agriculture, p. 285; Twelfth Census, Agriculture, pp. 11, 322.
- ⁸⁷ Tenth Census, Agriculture, p. 43; Twelfth Census, Agriculture, pp. 11, 599-60.
- ⁸⁸ Tenth Census, Agriculture, pp. 3-19; Twelfth Census, Agriculture, pp.
- ⁸⁹ Adrian F. McDonald, "History of Tobacco Production in Connecticut," (Tercentenary Commission of the State of Connecticut), (New Haven, n.d.), p. 15.; P. J. Anderson, *Tobacco Culture in Connecticut*, (New Haven, Agricultural Experiment Station, 1934), p. 801.
- ⁹⁰ McDonald, "Tobacco Production in Connecticut," p. 16.
- ⁹¹ Jenkins, "Connecticut Agriculture," p. 413.
- ⁹² Hartford *Courant*, April 28, 1902.
- ⁹³ Anderson, *Tobacco Culture in Connecticut*, p. 803.
- ⁹⁴ Shannon, *Farmer's Last Frontier*, p. 247.
- ⁹⁶ Thirtieth Annual Report . . . Board of Agriculture, 1896 (Hartford, 1897) pp. 70-73.
- ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁹⁸ Shannon, *Farmer's Last Frontier*, pp. 249-50.
- ⁹⁹ Samuel Koenig and David Rodnick, *Ethnic Factors in Connecticut, A Survey of Social, Economic, and Cultural Characteristics of the Connecticut Population* (WPA Writers Project) (New Haven, 1940), pp. 16-22.
- ¹⁰⁰ Twelfth Census, Population, Part I, p. xxii.
- ¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 485; Samuel Koenig, *Immigrant Settlements in Connecticut, Their Growth, Characteristics* (WPA Writers Project) (Hartford, 1938), p. 13.
- ¹⁰² Twelfth Census, Population, p. 808.
- ¹⁰³ Charlotte Erickson, *American Industry and the European Immigrant, 1860-85* (Cambridge, 1957), p. vii.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11; Mary Beard, *The American Labor Movement; A Short History* (New York, 1942) pp. 71-72.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29; Public Acts, 1865, pp. 8-9.
- ¹⁰⁸ Erickson, *American Industry and the European Immigrant*, p. 29.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. vii.
- ¹¹⁰ Koenig, *Immigrant Settlements*, pp. 17, 24-30.
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- ¹¹² Koenig, *Immigrant Settlements*, p. 29.
- ¹¹³ Edward Self, "Evils Incident to Immigration," *North American Review*, June, 1884, p. 86.
- ¹¹⁴ Koenig and Rodnick, *Ethnic Factors in Connecticut*, pp. 26-27.
- ¹¹⁵ Tenth Census of the United States, Population, p. 675.
- ¹¹⁶ Twelfth Census of the United States, pp. 817, 823.

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- 120 *Ibid.*, pp. 214-15.
- 121 Hansen and Brebner, *Mingling of the Canadian and American People*, pp. 164-65.
- 122 Koenig, *Immigrant Settlements*, pp. 31-32.
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- 128 *Hartford Times*, February 2, 1876.
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- 131 Annual Report . . . Board of Education of Connecticut, 1872, p. 210.
- 132 Daniel Chauncey Brewer, *The Conquest of New England by the Immigrant* (New York, 1926) pp. 145-56.
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- 134 *Ibid.*, p. 36; Twelfth Census of the United States, pp. 798-801.
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- 136 Koenig, *Immigrant Settlements*, p. 36.
- 137 *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 25-30; *Twelfth Census of the United States*, pp. 798-801.
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- 140 *New York Daily Tribune*, March 15, 1903.
- 141 *Ibid.*, March 13, 1903.
- 142 Koenig, *Immigrant Settlements*, p. 28.
- 143 United States Immigration Commission, Abstracts (Washington, 1911), Vol. I, p. 561.
- 144 Koenig, *Immigrant Settlements*, p. 17; Twelfth Census of the United States, pp. 798-801.

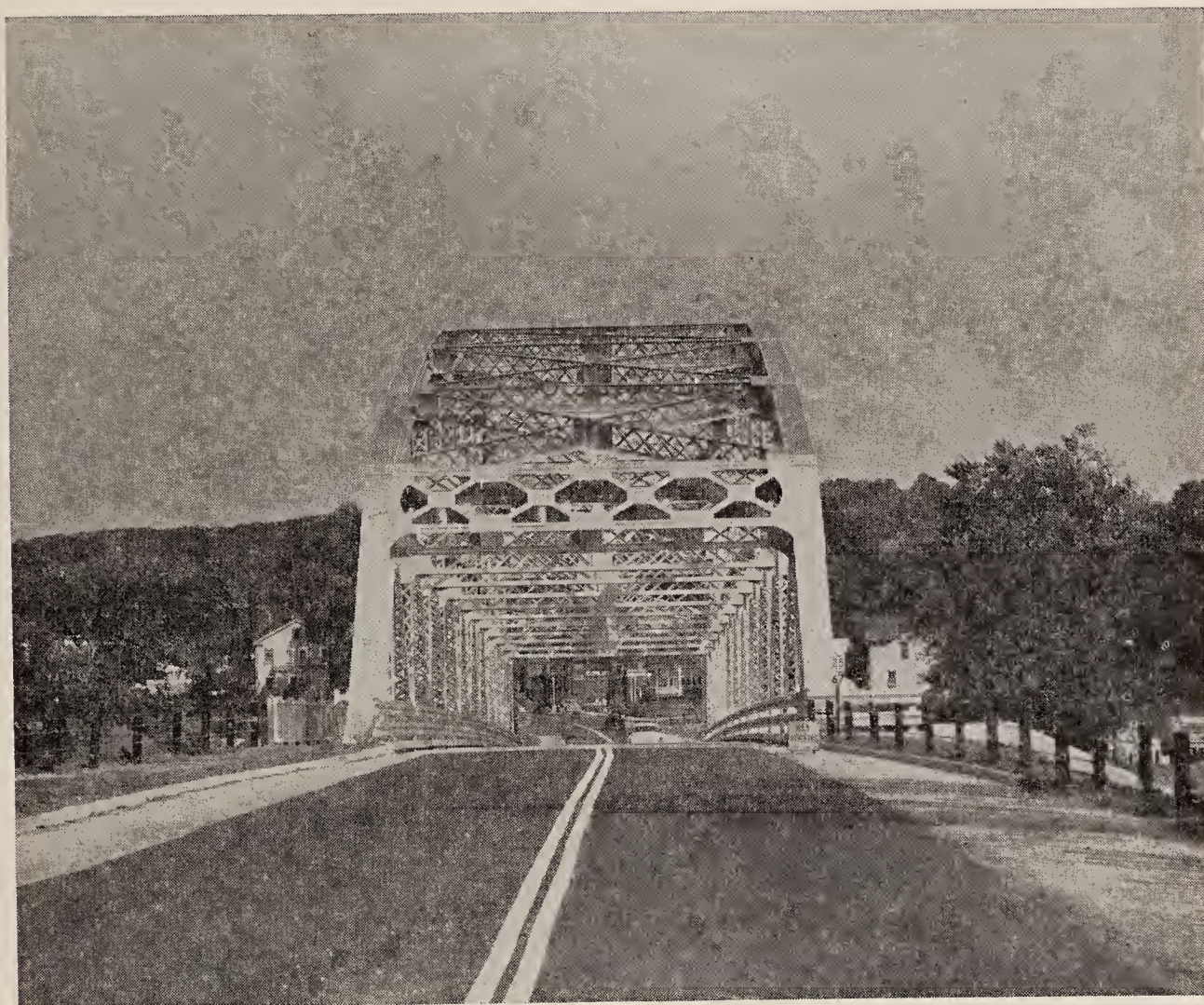
Chapter XXVIII

The Growth of the City

CONNECTICUT had become an urban society by 1890. At that time slightly more than half of her residents lived in communities of more than 8,000, and this was the population figure used in the United States census of that year for classification as an urban center.¹ In only four states, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, and New Jersey, was population more concentrated than in Connecticut.² The population of the five leading cities of the state, Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, and Waterbury, increased 260 percent from 1870 to 1900 while the population of the state increased only 65 percent.³ The exodus from the farm to the city continued unabated during these 30 years, with a decrease in population reported in 72 towns which were "almost wholly dependent on agriculture."⁴ By the end of the century the deaths in most rural towns were exceeding the births.⁵ By the beginning of the century there were more than 100 towns with a population of less than 3,000; in 70 towns the population was less than it had been 50 years previously.⁶

With the rapid growth of the manufacturing centers and the great influx of foreigners, humanity was crowded into living quarters previously considered characteristic of the old world, but not of the new. The death rate from infectious disease was invariably higher in the areas where population was concentrated. In a study of the 2,619 deaths from tuberculosis in New Haven from 1876 to 1891, it was found that the death rate was highest in the Irish neighborhoods of the southeastern part of the city, in the Irish-American neighborhoods in the western section, and in the negro settlement in the vicinity of Eaton and Webster streets. In a single ward which was heavily populated by Italians, 514 deaths occurred in 361 of the 650 houses located in the area.⁷

By the first decade of the twentieth century housing conditions were improving for skilled workers in New Haven who could pay from 15 to 25 dollars a month. Improvement came largely, it appears, through the building of tenements of from six to 18 family units. Tene-



(Courtesy Mills Coll., Conn. State Lib.)

NEW MILFORD—BRIDGE OVER HOUSATONIC RIVER, COMPLETED IN 1954

ment housing standards were determined by the thrifty among the foreigners who invested their savings in these dwellings. Although the tenements were crowded onto the smallest lots the law would permit, the units were greatly superior to those available to those who could pay only twelve dollars or less. As late as 1911 there were still more than 1,000 quarters with privies in their dooryards. Basement dwellings existed in large numbers, and, in the more thickly settled neighborhoods, rear tenements were also crowded onto the lots.⁸

Shortly after the beginning of the new century, two incidents occurred which focused attention on housing conditions in Connecticut's two largest cities. An independent investigation of housing conditions in New Haven depicted the horrible conditions of the crowded neighborhoods of the poor in that city. A report of the United States Bureau of Labor described the housing conditions in Hartford as the worst in any town of its size which was investigated by the Bureau. Hartford joined with New Haven in an effort to control tenement housing. The lack of public opinion in support of legislation and the opposition of the real estate interest limited the application of a bill which was passed to tenements which were to be erected. All provisions to correct and control unsanitary conditions in existing housing were eliminated. The need for adequate housing continued to perplex the growing cities and soon outstripped the ability of the municipal and state governments to meet it.⁹

Transportation arteries symbolized the energy of these urban centers and constituted their life-line as well. "If there is any kind of advancement going on," Horace Bushnell had declared in 1846, "if new ideas are abroad and new hopes are rising, then you will see it by the roads."¹⁰ Connecticut's industrial and financial development in the latter part of the nineteenth century had been brisk, and by 1900 her principal cities were connected by a consolidated system of railroads which bound the cities more tightly as an economic unit and provided the means by which the products of their teeming factories would be distributed.¹¹ In the period immediately following the Civil War, the streets of the cities meandered among the irregularly arranged collection of buildings in the same manner as in the earlier rural community from which the town had grown. New transportation lines, water mains, and sewage lines demanded that building lines be straightened and moved back. Streets were widened and new ones added as the population grew; stone and iron bridges replaced wooden structures which would no longer stand the strain of traffic. Even a cursory reading of the records of the cities reveals the preoccupation of their governing boards with these routines in the life of a city.¹²

As business centers became more congested and as traffic increased, hard surfaced roads became a necessity for both health and

convenience. Various materials were used for surfacing: gravel, stone, various types of block pavement, and asphalt were experimented with until macadamized surfacing came into general use by 1890. By this date approximately 80 percent of the paved streets of the five largest



(Angell Collection)

(Courtesy Norwalk Historical Society)

NORWALK—MERRITT PARKWAY ON AN AUGUST SUNDAY AFTERNOON IN 1944.
GASOLINE RATIONING THE CAUSE

cities was macadamized. Perhaps this process would have been even more widely used except for the practice, as in New Haven, of the city's paying the complete cost of paving with stone, but of requiring the owner of property abutting the pavement to bear two-thirds of the cost of using the improved pavement.¹³ The 218 miles of pavement in Connecticut's five cities gave them a slightly higher average than the national average of one mile for every 1,264 inhabitants and the average for the three largest cities of New Haven, Hartford, and Bridgeport was

even higher.¹⁴ Even with the pavement, the dust from the streets presented a serious health hazard and street sprinkling was practiced generally in Connecticut cities by the end of the century.¹⁵

A water supply, adequate for the concentrated populations of the cities was rarely supplied in advance of the most urgent need. Water works had been established in each of the five cities by 1870. Three of these were municipally owned. New Haven and Bridgeport, however, secured water through contractual arrangements with privately owned companies. If any of these water works could have been judged adequate when introduced, it did not long remain so. Perhaps the planners could not have been expected to anticipate the growth of the cities.¹⁶ Although Hartford had abandoned the Connecticut River as its sole source of water, it was still used for auxiliary purposes. An outbreak of typhoid fever in Hartford in 1879 pointed to the impure water drawn from the river, which, although freed from direct sewage in the vicinity of the town, was still contaminated by the sewage from Springfield. The State Board of Health called attention to the marked impurities of the water in the state in 1880, particularly in Hartford and New London. Within a few rods of the reservoir of one city was found a slaughter house. Gross negligence was noted where water for a school building was drawn from an area within a few feet of a large privy.¹⁷ During the succeeding decades water lines and reservoirs were added in the several cities and the works were altered with at least three of the cities introducing a gravity system.

The state made \$5,000 available in 1887 for a study of the pollution of rivers and a similar amount two years later for a study of the water works of the state. By 1890, 50 towns, with about two-thirds of the state's population of 750,000, provided inhabitants with drinking water from a supply intended for common use. The variant conditions under which the water was collected and treated and the changes in climatic conditions presented difficult problems in sanitation.¹⁸ The State Board of Health published in 1891 information to enable cities to provide wholesome water for their inhabitants.¹⁹ The speed with which an adequate supply of pure water would be made available was more dependent upon the speed with which the citizens could be educated to the necessity of action.



(Courtesy Chamber of Commerce of Greenwich, Inc.)
GREENWICH—SCENES IN BRUCE PARK

The concentration of people made the continuance of the existent sewerage system intolerable by the last decade of the century. The wooden logs which had transported the sewage along Anne street when the first sewers were laid in Hartford in 1844 would no longer suffice. Ditches, covered and uncovered, were made to serve the purpose of sewers in some cities as late as 1880. As late as this, too, Park River flowed through Hartford, within a stone's throw of the State Capitol, carrying the sewage and industrial waste not only of Hartford, but also of New Britain. Hartford was sometimes charged with not having a sewerage system at all. Water drains were made to serve as sewers in some instances in New Haven as late as 1890. In the absence of compelling laws, some property owners refused to connect with sewers which did exist. Cesspools and privy vaults could be found in the midst of the city, on premises owned by the poor and by the wealthy.²⁰ Officials of New Britain remained numb to the complaints of the riparian dwellers and continued to dump the city's sewage in Piper's Brook and the Sabethe River.²¹ Waterbury was taxed to the extent of its resources to keep abreast of the needs of its growing population.²²

Most of the larger cities were attending to the problem of sewage disposal by the end of the century. If the observations of a contributor to the *New England Magazine* were valid, there remained much to be desired. Frank Putnam charged that New England cities concerned themselves with providing beautiful buildings and parks "while neglecting the best devices for simple cleanliness."²³ Yet, in 1890, when compared to cities of the same size, Connecticut cities had considerably more sewerage lines than the national average.²⁴ However, in the older Connecticut cities, the systems were antiquated. Of Hartford's 48 miles of sewers, 44 were of brick or stone and about half of New Haven's 58 miles were of similar construction. The newer cities, such as Waterbury, were using pipes generally of six inches in diameter.²⁵ The public improvements of a half century earlier were in need of replacement as Hartford and New Haven continued their cycle of development in the twentieth century.

For the disposal of garbage, not the improvement, but the development of a municipal system was needed. It was customary for garbage to be mixed with ashes and the removal of waste and ashes was long re-

garded as the responsibility of the individual citizen.²⁶ Clean-up campaigns were conducted in cities, such as New Britain, where a campaign to make the city "as clean as an Easter Lily" was launched in 1911 with leaflets and billboards in six different languages.²⁷ Municipal neglect to make adequate provision for collection and disposition resulted, as in New Haven's tenement district, in piles of refuse "better imagined than described."²⁸ Contractual arrangements entered into by towns resulted in infrequent service, the use of open barrels, wooden carts, and dumping in the suburbs to feed pigs, and hindered the development of a means for the proper disposition of garbage.²⁹ As late as 1893, leaky box wagons could be seen strewing garbage through the streets of New Haven.³⁰ The cremation of garbage was generally recognized as the proper method of disposing of refuse, but little headway was made toward this until well in the twentieth century.³¹

The problems plaguing the cities are further illustrated by the efforts to care for the indigent. With the influx of population to the cities and the fluctuation of a fluid economic society, there were many who needed relief.³² The state's responsibility was limited to those discharged from penal institutions and to others only during the first six months of residence.³³ Not until 1907 was the state's responsibility broadened to include all residents who had not secured a settlement in a Connecticut town, although stringent settlement laws were reenacted in 1879. Until well into the twentieth century, a residence of several years was required for settlement, and, in addition residents who were not already inhabitants of the United States could gain a settlement only by the vote of the officials or inhabitants of a town.³⁴ The indigent congregated in the cities, and, lacking a settlement elsewhere, were cared for when in need largely in almshouses.³⁵

Each of the five cities owned their own almshouses, where contemporaries accounted the care of the poor "proper" largely because of the systematized visits of ladies.^{35a} Yet, here the paupers, the insane, the feeble minded, and the diseased were mixed indiscriminately—the children with the adults. In Hartford and Waterbury, prisoners awaiting trial and in some instances sentenced offenders were also received. Except in Hartford and New Haven, the sexes were not generally separated.³⁶ Also, there were countless numbers of "outdoor poor," those given aid,

but not institutionalized. These were described as a "great aggregation of misfortunes, incapacities, sorrows, miseries, diseases, vagrancies, vices, and crimes, breeding in and multiplying from generation to generation." In 1882, Hartford alone supported 531 families, consisting of 622 adults and 799 children. The numbers on outdoor relief doubtlessly included the perennially unemployed and political hangers-on, for, when towns began to refer all persons asking for aid to the almshouses, the requests decreased noticeably. By the end of the century cities began to place their relief upon a systematized and business-like basis.³⁷ Shortly after the turn of the century, trained social workers began to administer the charity departments of the large cities much to the consternation, it would seem, of the state officials.

The state liked to lessen its responsibility by "passing on" unfortunates to other jurisdictions. Sick persons were supplied with tickets home when they were in need of hospital attention. Whole families were shipped back to the place from which they came over protests that a little intelligent treatment would make them self-supporting and that "removal to their former residence would make them infinitely worse off in their economic status."³⁸ Those locally dispensing aid for which the state was financially responsible were considered to be inclined, at times, to interpret the law liberally and to grant relief beyond the period strictly permitted. The attitude of the State Comptroller toward such practices is revealed in his direction to the Bridgeport Charities in the case of one Martin Bray to "have him placed on an express train not stopping between Bridgeport and New York" as soon as his condition would permit. Also, instructions relative to one Harry Stevens were that if it were judged that the case was lingering "longer than was absolutely necessary" Stevens was "to be headed toward Niagara Falls."³⁹

A concomitant of the inadequacy of the services for the relief of the poor was prostitution. In a single year, it was charged, over 2,000 unemployed women were turned away from the charity offices of the five largest cities. It was assumed that a great number of these turned to prostitution. It was held that "the unskilled laborer becomes a tramp; the unskilled woman, a prostitute."⁴⁰ Dr. Thomas N. Hepburn, Secretary of the Connecticut Society of Social Hygiene, reported that in a city of 100,000 inhabitants hundreds of girls were sacrificed each year

for this purpose.⁴¹ Connecticut society chose to rely upon the force of law to eradicate the problem.⁴² No steps were taken to provide industrial and technical training for girls to fit them for industrial jobs. Connecticut was aware of the great wealth produced by the expanding industries, but was less sensitive to the social consequences in industrial



(Courtesy "Meriden Record-Journal")

MERIDEN—UNDERCLIFF HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

development. The complacency, of which society was accused by Hepburn, was, perhaps, its most astonishing feature.⁴³


The lot of the indigent and the depraved was made endurable and its acceptance by the affluent and the influential made easier, perhaps, by the corner saloon. After 1872, when Connecticut repealed its prohibitory law, the sale of liquor in Connecticut was controlled under a license law which gave a town the option of granting or refusing to its officials the right to issue licenses for the sale of spirituous liquors. With licenses ranging from \$100 to \$500 and all druggists, who could dispense liquor for medicinal purposes, paying only nominal fees, \$64,460 were received from the beer and liquor licenses granted in the City of

Hartford in the year ending June, 1895. Saloons were apparently even more numerous in New Haven and Bridgeport.⁴⁴ Waterbury was the only one of the five largest cities to choose prohibition under the optional law, voting against licensing in 1875 when evidence was submitted to indicate that drunkenness and accompanying crimes had increased in Waterbury by 50 percent during the three years after the passage of the act as compared to the previous three years under the state-wide prohibitory law. A great outcry arose against the detectives who were hired to enforce prohibition and their lives and those of others who supported prohibition were threatened. Waterbury disavowed its prohibitory law after a year and a month.⁴⁵

The Women's Christian Temperance Union and many local charity and religious organizations shifted from the support of temperance to the support of prohibition. They gained sufficient legislative support for a constitutional amendment prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors to pass in the General Assembly twice as required. The amendment, however, was not ratified by the people.⁴⁶ The reformers next turned to the establishment of temperance restaurants, such as the "Wayside Inn" in Waterbury, which was designed to provide at cheap rates food and lodging and an attractive refuge for men from the temptations of the saloon.⁴⁷ The saloon prevailed, however, as did most of the other social and health problems of the city.

It was electricity which directed urban living into the pattern of the modern city. In Hartford, the gas lights which had dotted the streets since 1849, were replaced with electric arc lights between 1883 and 1890. In other cities, however, lighting at public expense, remained a motley collection of arc, vapor, and gas lights until early in the next century.⁴⁸ The standards for adequate lighting are indicated by the request, tabled three times by the Hartford Aldermen, to install a gas light at the South Methodist Church where a portion of Main Street was "lighted in the best possible manner by two electric lamps, one two hundred feet distant and another four hundred feet distant."⁴⁹ Incandescent lighting had not been introduced by any of the Connecticut cities by 1890. Connecticut cities were, in fact, behind cities in other parts of the country, both as to the type of lighting and the number of lights per population. The only Connecticut city surpassing the 1890

national average of one lamp, paid for at public expense, to every 55 persons was New Haven, and its public lighting was almost entirely by gas.⁵⁰ The first electric lights were installed by New Haven in 1890.⁵¹ Electricity was not applied to lighting as quickly as it was to transportation.



1893. Farmington. Merchants of Farmington. General. The first boat that overtook in west. Capt. De Witt Clinton. He promised to pay on July 21, 1893.

Fourth of July EXCURSION.

THE CANAL BOAT DE WITT CLINTON,
Will start from the Market for Beach Port on Saturday morning (instead of Friday morning, as advertised, 6 o'clock, and return at sun-set.
Passage, to and from, 50cts. Passengers to find themselves, except with cold water: that can be had at the 1
New Haven, July 21, 1893.

(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

FARMINGTON CANAL BOAT "DE WITT CLINTON," FROM A POSTER OF THE TIME

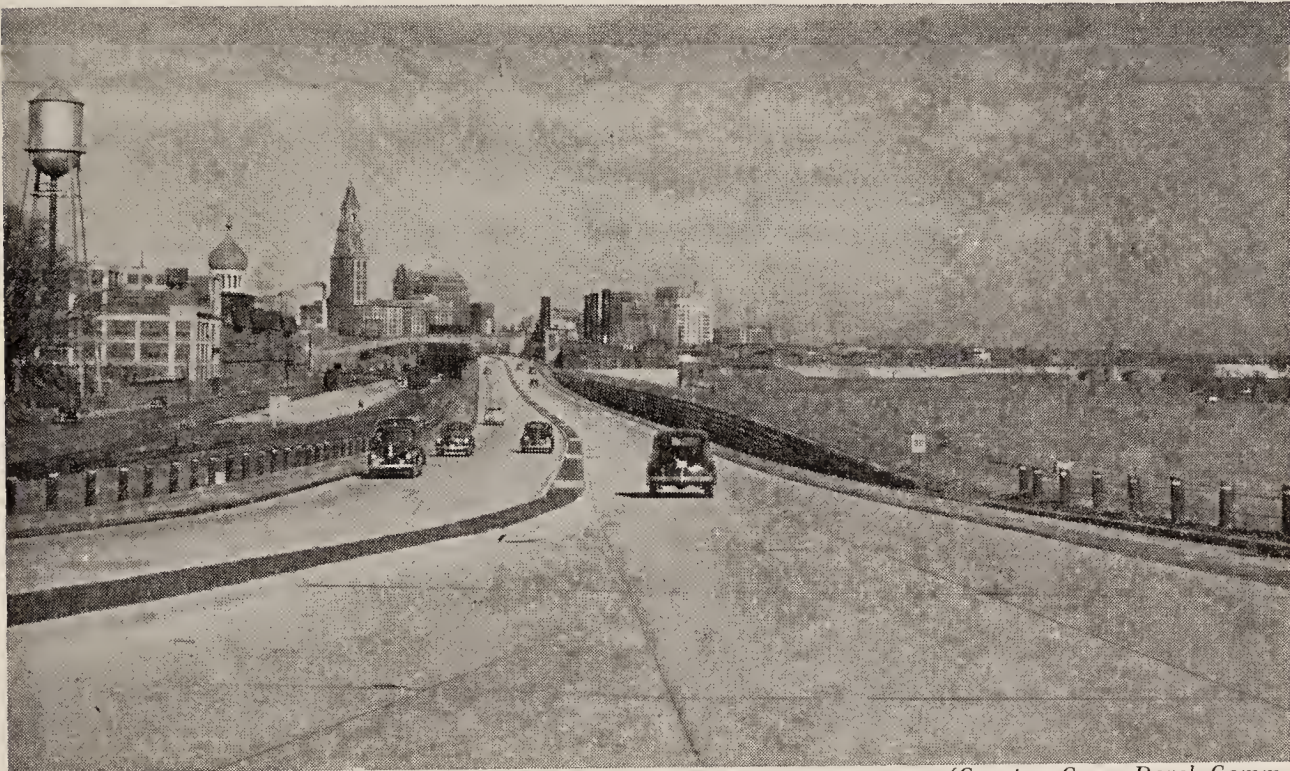
The introduction of electricity doomed the colorful horse-drawn railroads which had furnished transportation since the eighteen sixties. What might be called a system of transportation had been developed in Hartford and New Haven, when electrical trolleys were introduced in Connecticut cities in the last decade of the century.⁵² The General Assembly of 1893 had recognized railways as a public highway to be regulated for the benefit of the public and had provided that any extension of lines or alteration of motive power could be made only after public

hearings on the proposals and with the affirmation of the governing boards of the cities. The control of street railways was made the exclusive jurisdiction of the Mayor and Common Council, within the proviso that any railway which failed to exercise its charter within a specified time was to forfeit its rights. The possibilities of electrical powered trolleys caught the imagination of the public and the investor alike, and in 1896 the General Assembly incorporated 15 new street railways.⁵³

Trolley building proceeded at a tremendous rate. "Wherever the state and the towns build a level road bed linking the communities," it was said, "the trolley builders are quick to take advantage of it."⁵⁴ Despite the warnings of Mayor Joseph B. Sargent of New Haven relative to the dangers of monopolies, the New York and New Haven Railroad moved quickly to absorb the trolleys into its "water logged system" and fitted them into the grant alliance of railway, electrical, and insurance companies.⁵⁵ The operation was so successful that the New York and New Haven's "creature," the Connecticut Company, was operating lines in all of the cities of the state by the nineteen twenties. The Connecticut Company controlled 59 constituent companies, with a capital stock listed at 40,000,000 dollars, and had eliminated all but two independent companies.⁵⁶

With few exceptions public utilities in Connecticut cities were privately owned from the beginning. Gas, electricity, and trolleys were developed in the five leading cities by private enterprise without exception. The public water supply was developed in two of the five, in New Haven and Bridgeport, through contracts with private companies. The Bridgeport Hydraulic Company in 1857 assumed the contract of supplying water in that city after two other companies had failed in the attempt. Despite frequent complaints of the supply and quality of water, Bridgeport residents, in referendums in 1873, refused to authorize the city to purchase the works.⁵⁷ After a year of bickering, New Haven residents voted in 1854 in opposition to municipally owned water works, and the contract was granted to the New Haven Water Company. A new contract was entered into in 1891 which provided that "the city may buy the water company's property at any time, at a price to be fixed by arbiters . . . and that the water company will unite with

the city in procuring proper legislation by the next legislature for the transfer and payment of the property." No action was taken, however, by the next legislature.⁵⁸ Thereafter, New Haven's Mayor Sargent became one of the most ardent advocates of municipal control of public utilities, although the New Haven Water Company demonstrated a hazard of dependence upon private ownership when it refused to reveal



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

HARTFORD

the specific sources of water for the various sections of the city to the City Health Officer, who was attempting to locate the cause of infectious disease.⁵⁹

Sargent's admonitions indicated the public consciousness which, albeit a minority impulse, was emerging and which in the next century led to a measure of control of public utilities. Sargent reduced the issue to its simplest terms: "It is certainly better for the people to own and control these municipal monopolies than to be controlled by them." When he was inaugurated in 1891, he said: "All works of a public nature, carried on mainly within the bounds of a municipality and for the purpose of supplying the inhabitants with certain daily requirements of civilized city life, and requiring special rights of eminent domain to

distribute their products, should be owned and operated by the people, and in the sole interest of the people."

Investigation had revealed that the 38 municipally owned water works, out of the 46 in New England towns, all returned a profit to the municipality. Sargent believed that similar benefits would accrue from municipal ownership of other utilities. Public ownership of the production of illuminating gas and of its distribution to consumers had not been so popular as that of storing and distributing water. The Mayor believed this was because "the simplest processes of the production of gas have been concealed in mystery, to the great gain of the stockholders and cost of the public." The same reasons, Sargent held, had deterred the cities from producing their own electricity.

In applying his conviction with consistency to transportation, Sargent pointed out that the "whole people through their legislature, can permit the inhabitants of a municipality or locality to do on their public streets, whatever they can permit a private corporation to do, even to the extent of running cars by horse or other power. . . ." Indeed, he argued, "Permission by the Connecticut Legislature to private corporations to lay car tracks in streets and highways where they please, and to run their cars when and as they please, without particular reference to the reasonable convenience and interest of the people but with a view to the greatest profit to the corporation, is an unjust usurpation of the natural rights of the people of a municipality or locality." The New Haven Mayor was aware of the many applications for charters for street railways in the 1890's and warned against excessive capitalization designed to justify high fares and to exact large dividends. He was of the belief that no charter should be granted without a clause permitting the public to resume the franchise at its fair value. "The whole people are entitled to the benefits of the constant discoveries of means for better and cheaper living," he exhorted, "and no long monopoly of them should be tolerated." Sargent pleaded "Let us take care of the rights and interests of the city and the people, both present and future."⁶⁰

The idea of government as the inevitable regulator of rates, prices, and capitalization gained ground slowly in Connecticut. The construction and operation of the street railways seemed to have been brought under more stringent control by the legislation of 1893, and in the same

year efforts were made to control the production and distribution of gas and electricity. Only those specifically authorized by the state could produce electricity. Moreover, the right to manufacture and distribute gas and electricity was specifically granted to the towns upon the ap-



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

PLAINVILLE—LAST TROLLEY ON THE BRISTOL-PLAINVILLE LINE
THE NEXT RUN WAS MADE BY BUS JULY 17, 1935

proval of two-thirds of the Common Council and a majority of the citizens voting.⁶¹ Few towns, however, exercised this privilege.

The private interests in which capital was concentrated assumed control of the government. Wealth and industry combined in 1907 to beat back an effort by Governor Woodruff to insure honesty in the financing of new trolley lines. It was charged that the Connecticut Company had in fact paid only \$155,000 of a tax assessed at \$420,000 on the basis of its capital stock and outstanding bonds. A resolution proposed

the appointment of a Commissioner to investigate the taxes imposed against the public service corporation, to ascertain whether the tax had been paid, and to report to the next General Assembly. The agents of the parent corporation, the New Haven Railroad, flooded the capitol. The Senate voted, without explanation, to defeat the resolution and left the public to suffer the evils of over-capitalization. Relevant to an understanding of the forces opposing this and other regulations is the fact that the insurance companies owned six and one-half millions of the stock of the railroad and its subsidiaries. It was reported that, when Lincoln Steffens was asked why he did not use his pen for reform in his own state of Connecticut, he replied that the "conscience of the people has become so completely deadened that I could not get any results."⁶² If true, the hesitancy of this muckraking editor, whose virulent pen had attacked many deeply ensconced special privileges, to attack the Connecticut problem indicates the strength of the forces aligned against the regulation of municipal utilities in Connecticut.

The plight of the cities as they failed to meet social challenges or to enact adequate regulatory measures is explained in part by their failure to achieve political influence commensurate with their population. Despite their loss of population, the rural towns held tenaciously to their political power. It was through the representatives of the small towns that the forces of wealth and industry withstood attempts to impose regulations, contrary to the tenets of laissez-faire theory, but necessary to the well-being of urban communities.⁶³ Since the General Assembly was empowered to determine the charters of municipal governments, to extend their privileges, and to fix their limits, the representatives from the rural towns held the cities within firm control.⁶⁴ When the Senate, "hypnotized by the Spirit of the Age," proposed to submit to a vote of the people a six million dollar bond issue for public improvements, the members of the House of Representatives, "the palladium of a people's liberties," "shook its fist in the face of the Present and the Future" and rallied to defend the old order.⁶⁵ Thus the agents of special privilege controlled the state government and dominated politics to an extent that rendered equality of political opportunity "to the last degree ridiculous in Connecticut."⁶⁶

Action necessary to the growing cities was further impaired by the

duplication of town and city governments. As the cities expanded, they came more nearly to approximate the area of the ancient town. These towns on the fringes of urban settlement resisted efforts to consolidate the town and the city governments and continued to manage their



(Courtesy New Britain Chamber of Commerce)

NEW BRITAIN—NEW YMCA BUILDING

own affairs. The dual system of government entailed additional expense and caused friction. Eventually the necessity for cooperation in the provision of services compelled consolidation, but not until the last decade of the nineteenth century were town and city governments combined in either Hartford or in New Haven.⁶⁷ Only in 1960 did the consolidation of the town and city school systems of Middletown complete the elimination of dual government there.

Moreover, despite the influx of immigrants and the progressive decline of the percentage of old New England stock, members of the

latter still controlled city affairs and were bulwarks against innovation.⁶⁹ Those in control were most reluctant to see the direction of public affairs pass to other hands. The power of this conservative group was diminished somewhat, however, by state laws which channeled certain responsibilities in the hands of professionals, who were jealously independent. After a state law replaced the heterogeneous boards of health in every town, city, and borough with competent health officers charged with responsibility for sanitation, long overdue alterations in the sewerage systems were accomplished in many of the cities.⁷⁰

The hesitation to alter the structure of city government to meet the needs of the growing cities is reflected nowhere more clearly than in the fiscal policies of the cities. The grand list not only failed to increase in proportion to the population as would have been expected, but throughout the seventies and eighties it remained essentially the same in the older cities of Hartford and New Haven and lagged far behind that of the newer cities of Bridgeport, Waterbury, and New Britain.⁷¹ The imbalance of the population and the grand list was lessened somewhat by the end of the century. The 260 million dollar list of the five cities was about 100 percent greater than in the panic year of 1874. In the same time the population in the five cities had increased two and one-half times. Until near the end of the century there was a noticeable reluctance to fund bonds necessary for municipal improvements. As late as 1884, none of the cities had bonds outstanding in excess of 700,000 dollars, except Hartford, which had floated bonds to the amount of 1,000,000 dollars to locate the capitol there.

The demands for municipal improvements by the end of the century, however, not only forced the increase of the bonded indebtedness to an aggregate of over eight million dollars in the five cities, but necessitated an adjustment of the mill rate in Hartford and New Haven. The rate in New Haven was increased to 21 mills; and in Hartford, to 17. In each instance this represented an increase of almost 100 percent over the rate in 1884. The other cities met the increased demand for expenditure primarily through the growth in the grand list. Waterbury, for example, had a bonded indebtedness of only \$47,500 and a rate of six mills at the end of the century as compared to a bonded indebtedness of \$387,000 and a rate of 15 mills in 1884. During this period her grand

list had increased threefold to more than \$28,000,000. The indebtedness of the five cities represented an average per capita indebtedness of \$25.00, which, even in nineteenth century Connecticut, could not be interpreted as committing the next generations to bankruptcy.⁷²



(Courtesy "Meriden Record-Journal")

MERIDEN—THE BRADLEY MEMORIAL HOME

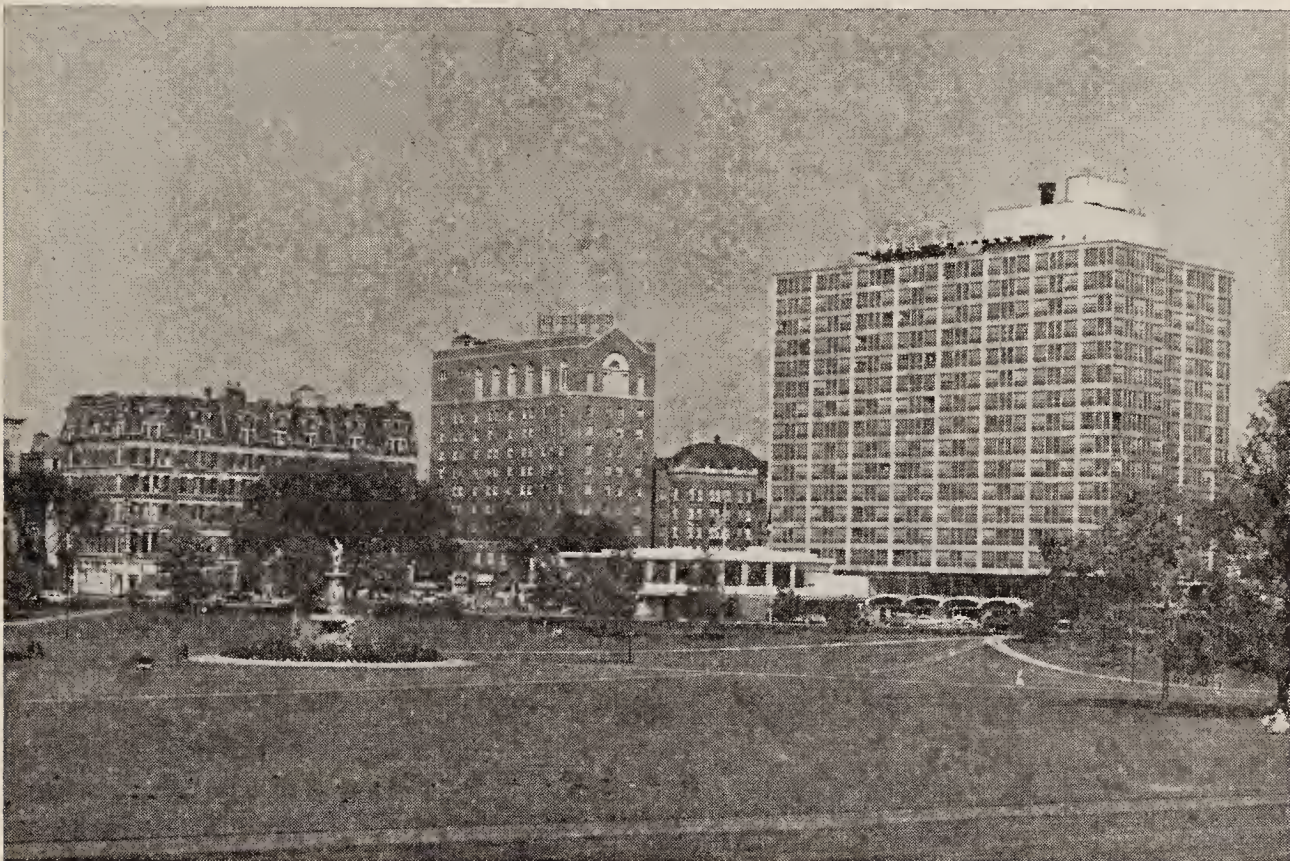
As the population increased buildings encroached upon park areas and in many instances the parks and squares of earlier periods were subdivided into residence lots. The very increase in population added importance to parks, however. Hartford's largest park, identified since 1876 as Bushnell Park, was laid out in 1855 primarily as the result of the efforts of Horace Bushnell. As early as 1865, the Court of the Common Council of New Haven requested an amendment to the city charter which would permit them to acquire lands outside the city. The agitation for more lands for recreational purposes increased, and, in 1880, New Haven acquired and set aside 350 acres on the New Haven-Hamden line for a park. During the decade additional facilities were established in the western part of the city, and in 1889 the Council voted \$200,000 in bonds to support the park system.⁷³ By the first dec-

ade of the twentieth century, Connecticut was judged to have achieved an excellent park system. In 1910, for example, there were eleven parks in Hartford, ranging in size from 2.85 acres to the 663-acre Kenney Park, which was then the second largest in New England. Some of these parks, such as Bushnell, Colt, Riverside, had school gardens, and Goodwin boasted a public golf course.⁷⁴ Indeed, one observer charged that Connecticut cities developed their parks and public buildings at the neglect of more pressing social problems.^{74a}

Despite the burdens borne by the cities, in the years between the American Civil War and World War I material gains were achieved and enjoyed generally by all segments of the population. The more numerous laborers of the cities were carried along by the new opportunities provided by the developing industrialism. For many who had experienced the disappointments of attempting to eke out a living from Connecticut's thin soils and for others who had suffered deprivation in foreign lands, the new margin of comfort, however meager, was greater than before. The additional numbers who could afford leisure is revealed in the range of opportunities offered for recreation.

Saratoga and Niagara Falls continued to attract the affluent; such other resorts as Stafford Springs, Guilford, Sachem's Head, Saybrook Point, and Milford Point were flourishing. Yachtsmen found New London a desirable place in which to moor their craft. Woodbury was advertised as having a race course where gentlemen could exercise their horses, and a "new and elegant track for pleasure teams" was constructed at Hamilton Park, New Haven, by the Gentlemen's Driving Association. Golf and tennis were regarded as exclusively for the rich. When, in 1886, a petition was submitted to the aldermen to set aside a portion of a public park in Hartford for tennis courts, it was charged that "many of the signers were bank and insurance clerks" and that "some had large and beautiful lawns of their own." It seemed to the investigating committee that the petitioners did not need the assistance of the public, but that they might use some of their own grounds rather than destroy those maintained at public expense. Private clubs such as the Waterbury and New Haven lawn clubs, sprang up for tennis. Interest in golf, the Scottish game introduced into New York in 1888, developed, and private golf clubs appeared in Connecticut before the

end of the century. Golf was introduced into New Haven by Professor Theodore S. Woolsey of Yale and Justus S. Hotchkiss, a retired businessman, in 1895. Initially, the principal devotees were the Yale faculty and students, but soon business and professional men found time for it and new clubs were formed.⁷⁵



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

HARTFORD-BUSHNELL PARK

Those of more modest means enjoyed a certain amount of leisure and there was recreation for them, too. Rural towns, such as Pomfret, Washington, Redding, and Litchfield, became centers for summer boarders. For those who could afford only a short excursion, the steamboat companies arranged trips down the Connecticut River. The railroads took skating parties to Lake Saltonstall and sleighing was revived in the eighties. Roller skating was the craze of the eighties as was cycling in the next decade. Instructions were elaborated for croquet parties. Archery contests were held in increasing numbers. The need to provide recreational occupation for large numbers of people concurrently was met successfully as baseball developed. Teams representing towns competed

and spectators participated through support of the home team as they sipped American soda fountain water.⁷⁶

That all did not engage in what was accepted as wholesome forms of recreation is suggested by the public acts enacted to regulate the sale of obscene literature and to prevent children under sixteen years of age from frequenting dance houses, concert saloons, roller skating rinks, vaudeville theaters, and variety shows.⁷⁷

The theater failed to develop in the first half of the nineteenth century, perhaps because of the lingering influence of Puritanism. Colloquies were presented at Yale before mid-century, but only Hartford could claim what could be called a theater. New Haven was without suitable facilities for theatrical productions until the Music Hall, established in 1860 for concerts, was altered for dramatic productions and renamed the Grand Opera in 1870. In Waterbury, the City Hall was opened for public performances in 1869 and the Jacques Opera House was erected there in 1886. In smaller cities any available hall was used. As interest and acceptance were extended, structures specifically designed for the dramatic arts were erected in several cities. A theater circuit was existent in the state as early as the eighties. That the programs offered appealed to a wide variety of tastes is suggested by the appearance in Waterbury of George L. Fox, the clown, and by Sarah Bernhardt in New Haven in *Camille* in 1886 and in *La Tosca* five years later.⁷⁸

The growth of the cities, with their expanding financial and commercial institutions, is nowhere better illustrated than in the public and private buildings erected. Old landmarks disappeared in New Haven as the Public Library, the County Court House, the Connecticut Savings Bank, the Union and New Haven Trust Company, and the Mechanics Bank came to occupy the central portion of the city. The new-found prosperity was everywhere evident as the simple Georgian residences of downtown Hartford gave way to the edifices of the insurance companies, the public buildings, and the new business and professional structures. As if to refute the simplicity of an earlier era there arose on Hartford's Main Street in the years from 1868 to 1877 examples Romanesque, Gothic, and Italian Renaissance. Variations were multiplied as each of the styles was executed in several different materials.

The more imposing structures, such as the public buildings, the banks, and the insurance offices, used either granite or marble. Others used Longmeadow stone, Portland brownstone, or Ohio sandstone. The Hartford Public High School was made of pressed brick.⁷⁹



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

HARTFORD—BUSHNELL PARK

As architects extended their skills from public to domestic architecture, decorative concepts rather than utility became determinants of style. The once simple roof lines, for example, were discarded for domes and towers. Further novelty was sought through the use of color. The home of Mark Twain, where vermilion bands accented other exterior wood painted a darker hue of red and were combined with red brick, is the classic illustration of the use of color in Connecticut. As Connecti-

cut residents extended their search for the novel, the results were frequently grotesque.⁸⁰

As the lust for the arts increased, Connecticut residents flocked to clubs and organizations designed to improve their skills and understanding. In Hartford, for example, the Art Society was organized in 1877 and provided courses in drawing, oil painting, watercolors, pastels, and advanced illustration. The Connecticut League of Art Students was founded in 1888, the Arts and Crafts Club in 1893, the Connecticut Chapter of the Institute of Architects in 1902, and the Municipal Art Society in 1904.⁸¹ Many Connecticut artists found more fertile fields for their talents outside their native state. Connecticut-born Bela L. Pratt, sculptor and teacher in the Boston Museum School of Fine Arts, reached his greatest height, perhaps, in the sketch models he prepared of the two groups on the Water Gate and the Peristyle at the Chicago World Fair.⁸² There were creditable sculptures in the state, as Karl Gerhardt's bronze of Nathan Hale in the State Capitol. The portrayal by Yale's Professor of Art, John G. Weir, of President Woolsey gained the respect of critics such as Lorado Taft.⁸³ Meanwhile, the Wadsworth Atheneum, which had continued to stand as guardian over Hartford's good taste through its Public Art Gallery, expanded its building in the latter part of the century and became the center of the intellectual as well as the artistic life of the Capitol city.⁸⁴

Perhaps as striking a symbol as any of the transition from a rural to an urban society was the assumption by cities of the responsibility of financing libraries out of public funds. Libraries had grown as settlements had developed until their existence had become traditional for Connecticut towns. To finance them through private means was equally traditional. Private libraries, however, could not meet the needs of a municipal population and many of them, such as the one in Bridgeport, were hopelessly in debt.⁸⁵ Agitation for public libraries had begun shortly after the Civil War, but it was not until the eighteen eighties, after the State authorized the cities to use monies collected through taxes that public libraries were established in larger cities. A public library was opened in Bridgeport in 1881, and in New Haven in 1887. Within five years the latter was subscribing to 130 periodicals and held more than 20,000 volumes, 5,000 of which had been purchased within the last

year.⁸⁶ An addition was made to the Wadsworth Atheneum in 1893 to house the Hartford Public Library and here, too, the private collection, the Watkinson Library, was housed on the second floor.⁸⁷ The transition from private to public library in the smaller towns was gradual in the next century.



(Courtesy Chamber of Commerce of Greenwich, Inc.)

GREENWICH—OLD GREENWICH LIBRARY, FROM BINNEY PARK

The outward evidences of interest in literature were readily apparent. The many book publishing firms in Hartford noted by a traveler in 1878 prompted him to record that “perhaps . . . in no other city of the United States of the same size is there so large a proportion of the population devoted to literature.”⁸⁹ The American and Hartford Publishing Company was only one of the many located in the city. Captain Glazier, however, failed to distinguish the commercial from the ascetic or the intellectual in the literary interest.

There was no Connecticut literature either from the point of view of its subject content or in the sense of a school of writers. There were competent individual authors associated with Connecticut by birth or residence. These included Amos Bronson Alcott (1799-1888), who was born in Wolcott, but who migrated to Concord before producing his major literary works. Only his "New Connecticut: An Autobiographical



NORTH HAVEN—MARTHA CULVER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Poem," published seven years before his death, was specifically tied to Connecticut. Edward Rowland Sill, who wrote of life and love, of God and Man, and of faith and practice, even though he died as he was approaching what might have been his most productive years, left his native Windsor to serve as Professor of English literature at the University of California. Others, such as Mark Twain, resided in the state generally without its being a source of literary inspiration.⁹⁰ There were others, generally more closely associated with the earlier part of the century, whose life and in some instances works extended into the latter half. These included Henry Clay Work (1832-1884), George Denison Prentice (1802-1870), Emma Hart Willard (1787-1870), Rose Terry Cooke (1827-1892), and Horace Bushnell (1802-76), all of whom were natives of Connecticut. The most prolific Connecticut writer of the late nineteenth century was Edmund Clarence Stedman (1833-1908) of

Norwich. A fun-loving youth, he was forced to withdraw from Yale, but returned to his alma mater twice to receive honorary degrees. A bibliography of his works, listing 369 separate items, including anthologies, criticisms, and poems, is evidence of his tireless endeavor.⁹¹ The failure of Connecticut to develop a Connecticut literature has been explained as an indication of the "mergence of the local into the national."⁹²

NOTES—CHAPTER XXVIII

¹ Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Population, Part I, p. lxxxii.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, pp. xxii, 430-32.

⁴ Report of the Bureau of Vital Statistics, 1890, p. 9, Public Documents, 1891, Vol. II.

⁵ Report of the Bureau of Vital Statistics, 1895, p. 7, Public Documents, 1897, Vol. III; *ibid.*, 1899, p. 8, Public Documents, 1900, Vol. III.

⁶ Frank Putnam, "Connecticut: the State Ruled by its Uninhabited Country Towns," *New England Magazine*, Vol. 37, November, 1907, p. 272.

⁷ Report of the State Board of Health, 1891, pp. 219-26, Public Documents, 1892.

⁸ Emma W. Rogers, "The Foreign Invasion of a New England Town—New Haven," *The Survey*, Vol. 26, 1911, pp. 378-79.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ J. Hammond Trumbull, ed., *The Memorial History of Hartford County Connecticut, 1633-1884*, 2 Vols., Vol. I, *Hartford, County, Town, and City* (Boston, 1886), p. 562.

¹¹ Rollin G. Osterweis, *Three Centuries of New Haven, 1638-1938* (New Haven, 1952), (Publ. by the New Haven Colony Hist. Soc. at the request of the New Haven Tercentenary Committee), p. 386.

¹² City Year Book for the City of New Haven for 1893 (New Haven, 1894), *passim*; Journal of the Board of Aldermen of the City of Hartford for 1886-87 (Hartford, 1887), *passim*; *ibid.*, 1892-93 (Hartford, 1893), *passim*; Osterweis, *Three Centuries of New Haven*, p. 331.

¹³ City Year Book . . . New Haven, 1893, p. 24; Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890, Report of Social Statistics, *passim*.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Twelfth Census, 1900, Population, Part I, p. lxix.

¹⁵ Public Acts, 1899, pp. 113-32.

¹⁶ Report of the Examination of Certain Connecticut Water Works, State Board of Health, 1891, pp. 228-447, Public Documents, 1892, Vol. II.

¹⁷ Report of the State Board of Health, 1879, p. 8, Public Documents, 1880; *ibid.*, 1880, pp. 13-19, Public Documents, 1881.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1890, pp. 3-19, Public Documents, 1891, Vol. II.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1880, pp. 137-59; Journal of the Board of Aldermen . . . Hartford, 1892-93 (Hartford, 1893), p. 16.

²⁰ *Ibid.*; Report of the State Board of Health, 1890, pp. 71-74; Public Documents, 1891, Vol. II; City Year Book . . . New Haven, 1893, pp. 27-29.

²¹ Second Annual Report of the Sewerage Commission, 1900, p. 4, Public Documents, 1900, Vol. III.

²² Report of the State Board of Health, 1891, pp. 159-60, Public Documents, 1892.

- ²³ Putnam, "Connecticut: the State Ruled by its Uninhabited Towns," *New England Magazine*, Vol. 37, 1907, p. 290.
- ²⁴ Eleventh Census, 1890, Report of Social Statistics, pp. 30, 78-87.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ Journal of the Board of Aldermen, Hartford, 1886-87, p. 280; City Yearbook, New Haven, 1893, pp. 204-5.
- ²⁷ Rogers, "The Foreign Invasion of a New England Town," *The Survey*, Vol. 26, 1911, p. 292.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 373.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*
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- ³² Report of the Board of Charities, 1885, pp. 45-55, Public Documents, 1885, Vol. II.
- ³³ Edward Warren Capen, "The History of Connecticut Institutions," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. V, pp. 429-33.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*
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- ^{35a} *Ibid.*, 1883, pp. 4-5, Public Documents, 1883.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1889 and 1890, pp. 128-53, Public Documents, 1891, Vol. II; *ibid.*, 1895-96, p. 220, Public Documents, 1896; *ibid.*, 1884, p. 9, Public Documents, Vol. I.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1899 and 1900, pp. 63-64, Public Documents, 1909, Vol. III; Capen, "Connecticut Institutions," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. V, p. 431.
- ³⁸ *The Survey*, Vol. 31, 1914, p. 64.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ "The Common Welfare," *The Survey*, Vol. 26, 1911, p. 212.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴² *Ibid.*; Public Acts, 1889, p. 20.
- ⁴³ "The Common Welfare," *The Survey*, Vol. 26, 1911, p. 212.
- ⁴⁴ Report of the Board of Charities for 1895-96, pp. 270-78, Public Documents, 1897, Vol. I; Public Acts, 1872, p. 93.
- ⁴⁵ Joseph Anderson, ed., *The Town and City of Waterbury, Connecticut, from the Aboriginal Period to the Year Eighteen Hundred and Ninety-Five*, (New Haven, 1896) Vol. III, pp. 911-12.
- ⁴⁶ Public Acts, 1889, p. 93.
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- ⁵⁰ Billings, *Social Statistics*, pp. 20, 63-67.
- ⁵¹ Osterweis, *New Haven*, pp. 335-36.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 335; Trumbull, ed., *Hartford County*, Vol. I, p. 562; Anderson, ed., *Waterbury*, Vol. II, p. 148; William A. Countryman, "Transportation," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, pp. 516-19; Journal of the Board of Aldermen, Hartford, 1892-93, p. 456.
- ⁵³ Public Acts, 1893, pp. 307-15; Countryman, "Transportation," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, p. 519.
- ⁵⁴ Putnam, "Connecticut: the State Ruled by its Uninhabited Country Towns," *New England Magazine*, Vol. 37, 1907, p. 286.

- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, City Yearbook of New Haven, 1893, p. 48.
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- ⁵⁷ Anderson, ed., *Waterbury*, pp. 312-14; Osterweis, *New Haven*, pp. 334-35; Trumbull, ed., *Hartford County*, Vol. I, pp. 455-62.
- ⁵⁸ City Yearbook of New Haven, 1893, p. 36.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 1897, p. 237.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 1893, pp. 44-49; Putnam, "Connecticut: the State Ruled by its Uninhabited Country Towns," *New England Magazine*, Vol. 37, 1907, pp. 267-72.
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- ⁶² Putnam, "Connecticut: the State Ruled by its Uninhabited Country Towns," *New England Magazine*, Vol. 37, 1907, p. 287.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 272.
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- ⁶⁷ Charter and Ordinances of the City of New Haven, 1898, (New Haven, 1898), pp. 77-86; City Yearbook of New Haven, 1893, pp. 42-43; Trumbull, ed., *Hartford County*, Vol. I, p. 387; Journal of the Board of Aldermen, Hartford, 1892-93, p. 354.
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- ⁷³ Trumbull, ed., *Hartford County*, Vol. I, pp. 447-49; Osterweis, *New Haven*, pp. 332-34.
- ⁷⁴ Ethel Loomis Dickinson, "Civic Improvements in Hartford, Connecticut," *New England Magazine*, Vol. 41, pp. 802-805.
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- ⁷⁵ Mrs. Sidney K. Mitchell, "Social Life and Customs," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. V, pp. 306-308; Osterweis, *New Haven*, p. 380; Journal of the Board of Aldermen, Hartford, 1886-88, pp. 70-71; Anderson, *Waterbury*, Vol. III, p. 1107.
- ⁷⁶ Mitchell, "Social Life and Customs," pp. 306-308; Public Acts, 1895, p. 636.
- ⁷⁷ Public Acts, 1895, pp. 558-59, 565.
- ⁷⁸ Osterweis, *New Haven*, p. 347; Anderson, *Waterbury*, Vol. III, pp. 1091-99.
- ⁷⁹ Trumbull, ed., *Hartford County*, Vol. I, pp. 463-96; Osterweis, *New Haven*, p. 392.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

- ⁸¹ Dickinson, "Civic Improvements in Hartford, Connecticut," *New England Magazine*, Vol. 41, pp. 802-805.
- ⁸² Lorado Taft, *The History of American Sculpture* (New York, 1930), pp. 491-502.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁴ Dickinson, "Civic Improvements in Hartford, Connecticut," *New England Magazine*, Vol. 41, pp. 802-805.
- ⁸⁵ Samuel Orcutt, *A History of the City of Bridgeport, Connecticut* (New Haven, 1887), p. 225.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*; Osterweis, *New Haven*, p. 343; Yearbook of New Haven, 1893, p. 37.
- ⁸⁷ Dickinson, "Civic Improvements in Hartford, Connecticut," *New England Magazine*, Vol. 41, p. 806.
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- ⁹⁰ David G. Downey, *Modern Poets and Christian Teaching* (New York, 1906), pp. 141-44; Stanley Thomas Williams, "The Literature of Connecticut," Tercentenary pamphlet, pp. 19-22; Robert E. Spiller *et al.*, eds., *Literary History of the United States* (New York, 1948), Vol. III, pp. 136-37.
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Chapter XXIX

Republican Years

THE LAST decades of the nineteenth century were Republican years. The Democrats who had lost control of the lower house were not to regain it until 1959; the Republican control of the executive branch was interrupted only twice in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century, first by Thomas McDonald Waller in 1883-85 and then by Luzon B. Morris a decade later. In Waller's term, the Democrats controlled the Senate for the only time during the period; during Morris' term the Senate was equally divided. Despite their succession of victories, the Republican margin during the eighties was less than two percent of the total vote, largely, it would seem, as the result of defections within the party itself.¹

The refusal of a number of party members to support the candidacy of James G. Blaine for President resulted in the formation of the Independent Republicans. The leader of these Mugwumps, as they were popularly called, was Simeon Baldwin. In October of 1884, Baldwin called upon fellow Republicans to withhold their support of Blaine. The rift was projected into the state election the next year when the Independents withheld their support of the state ticket until the Republican platform was made public. The schism did not permanently affect the party, although Baldwin himself never returned to it, but joined the Democrats in 1890.²

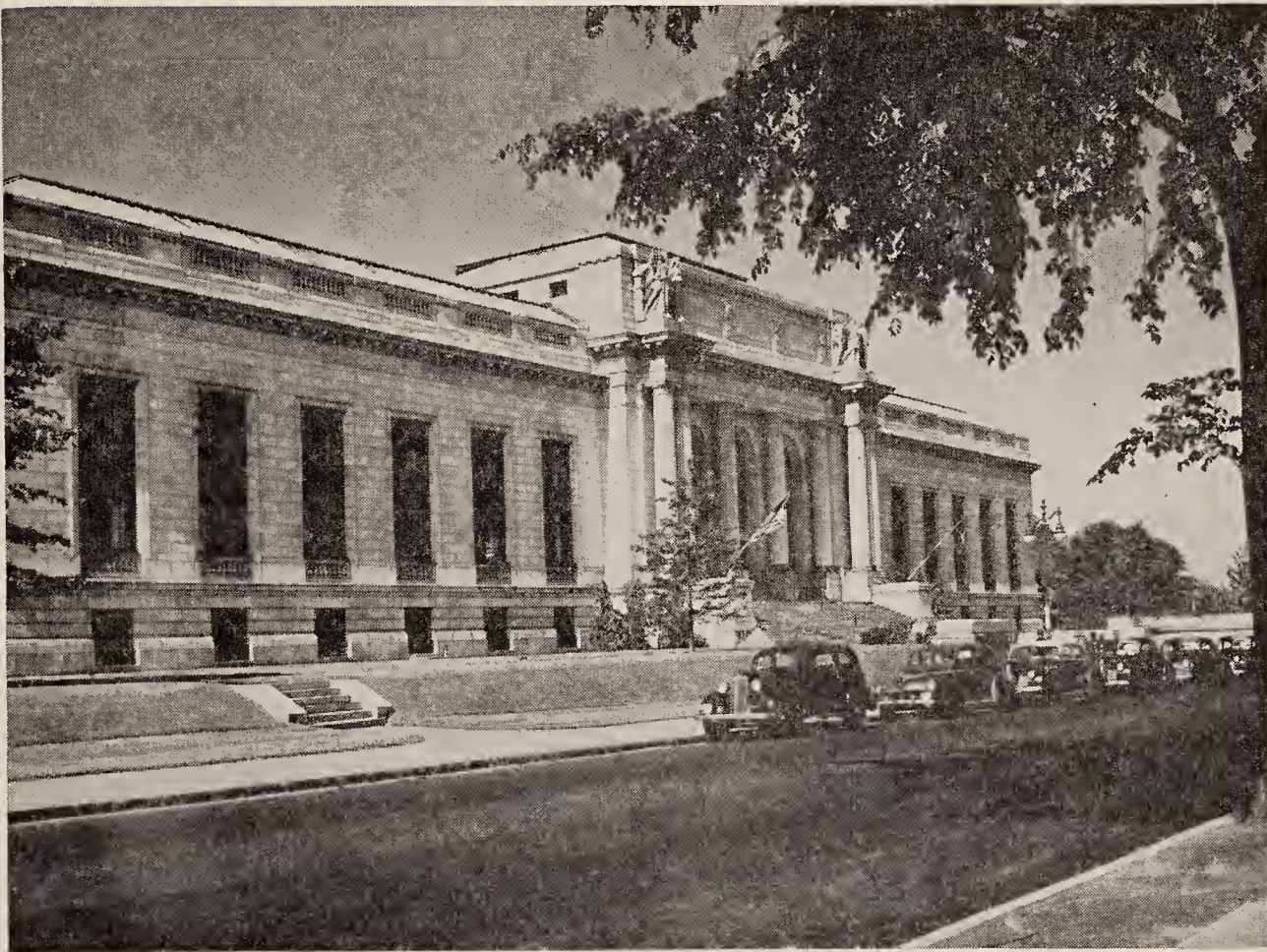
Political leadership accrued to those who were in accord with the changes which were occurring in Connecticut life. Among the late nineteenth century leaders were self-made men such as Hobart B. Bigelow (1881-1883), who rose from a position as a machine apprentice to one of the leading manufacturers of the state. Also, there was Phineas C.

Lounsbury (1887-1889), who left his father's farm near Ridgefield to seek his fortune in New York, where he served as a clerk and later as a "drummer" before he became engaged in the manufacture of boots and shoes. A tie with the past was provided by Morgan G. Bulkeley, whose ancestors included the recalcitrant Gershom Bulkeley of Andros' day. Morgan Bulkeley was a leader in the rising banking and insurance interests and revealed an accommodation to the contemporary when he unashamedly asserted before the Judiciary Committee of the Legislature that the votes of the ignorant and the unprincipled should be secured by any means possible to serve the best interests of the Party in which one believed.³ Lawyers such as Charles Bartlett Andrews (1879-81) and Henry Baldwin Harrison continued to give evidence of the close alliance of the legal profession and politics.⁴

The dangers of the rising power of industry did not pass unnoticed or unchallenged by Connecticut's new political leaders, however. Charles Bartlett Andrews (1879-81), in his inaugural address, questioned "whether the indefinite multiplying of corporations is not an evil rather than a good." Andrews argued that the intent of Connecticut law as applied to property was to promote equality among all citizens by providing for a division of property once every generation, and not to abet "the building up of large fortunes by individuals while the many remain poor." Huge fortunes, Andrews charged, created a kind of feudalism in which a few sought to achieve through the power of money that which was done in the Middle Ages by force. Experience indicated, Andrews held, "that every combination of numbers and much more of capital, unless carefully guarded, almost inevitably generates a disregard for the rights of others for the simple reason that such combinations increase intensity of action, separate in some degree the associated members from the rest of the community, and subject them to separate rules of action." To correct the danger he believed imminent, Andrews suggested that stockholders, or at least managers, of a corporation be made to assume a degree of personal liability.⁵ Yet, he was convinced, too, that the complications which society faced were primarily the result of "too much rather than too little legislation."⁶

It was the spirit of *laissez-faire* which came to characterize the period. By the time of Morgan Bulkeley, Andrew's ideas found only

faint echo when Bulkeley reminded the legislators that people must be protected during the consolidation of capital.⁷ Caution derived from the realization of the importance of manufacture to the welfare of the state persistently and effectively blocked stringently restrictive legislation.



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HARTFORD—STATE LIBRARY AND SUPREME COURT

The political leaders of the state, nevertheless, gave some evidence of the awareness of the demands of the society of which they were a part in the establishment of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the regulation of the saving banks, the support extended to the hospital for the insane, and the recommendation to expand the normal school. Extension of these services, however, was restrained by a fiscal prudence calculated to eliminate the public debt and to permit a reduction in taxes. The Republicans, moreover, refused to countenance any innovation which

would require an alteration of the existent framework of government, such as modification of the basis of representation.⁹

The Governors, in fact, exercised only advisory or persuasive power over the legislative process. The right of veto amounted to no more than an opportunity for the Governor to express an opinion, inasmuch as only a bare majority was required to pass a bill over his veto. The Governor's signature to a law was "merely perfunctory, but by no means necessary,"¹⁰ except if the legislature adjourned and left the final disposition of legislation contingent upon the Governor's approval. Governor Thomas Waller protested that except in extraordinary circumstances, such an eventuality should never occur. Waller, a Democrat, void of any real power as Governor, was seeking to fix in the public mind that the responsibility for legislation rested with the enacting body.¹¹ Connecticut's traditional fear of a too-powerful executive is revealed not only in the fact that no Governor was elected to succeed himself during the period, but also by the circumstance that no Governor even received the renomination of his Party.¹²

The power of the legislators was not limited to legislative matters, but extended, for example, to the actual selection of the Governor. Of all their powers, that which was most frequently abused, was that of granting special charters to private and public corporations. The right to elect the Judges of the minor courts had come to be regarded by many as one which should be exercised only on the recommendation of the executive. It was charged, too, that the selection of County Commissioners by the legislature resulted in the Commissioners' not being responsible to anyone for the discharge of their duties.¹³ When no gubernatorial candidate received a majority of the total votes cast, the Assembly "by joint ballot of both houses" was to proceed, without debate, to choose a Governor from the two with the highest number of votes. In the elections of 1884, 1886, and 1888, no candidate received a majority of votes, and in 1890 the count of votes was contested. Although in each instance, the Democratic candidate received a plurality of from 1,000 to 3,000 votes, he was denied the Governorship by the General Assembly.¹⁴

The election of 1890 was one of the most bitterly contested in the state's history. The candidates were Luzon B. Morris, Democrat; Samuel E. Merewin, Republican; Henry C. Baldwin, Labor; and Phineas

M. Augur, Prohibition. The Board of Canvassers, composed of the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Comptroller, reported on the first day of the session that Luzon B. Morris had received 67,662 votes or twelve more than necessary for a majority of the 135,298 cast. The House, in which the Republicans had a majority of ten, refused to accept the report of the Canvassers as final. After appointing a committee to investigate alleged election day irregularities, the Assembly recessed, thereby avoiding any technicality which might be raised as to its legal responsibility to examine and act at once upon the results of an election. The Senate, in which the Democrats had a majority of five, swore Morris into office in the Senate Chamber. They locked the doors of the Senate Chamber and Morris retired for the day. Bulkeley, acting on an amendment adopted in 1884, which provided that state officers should hold their office for their duly designated terms and "until their successors are duly qualified" continued to serve as Governor for the next two years.¹⁵

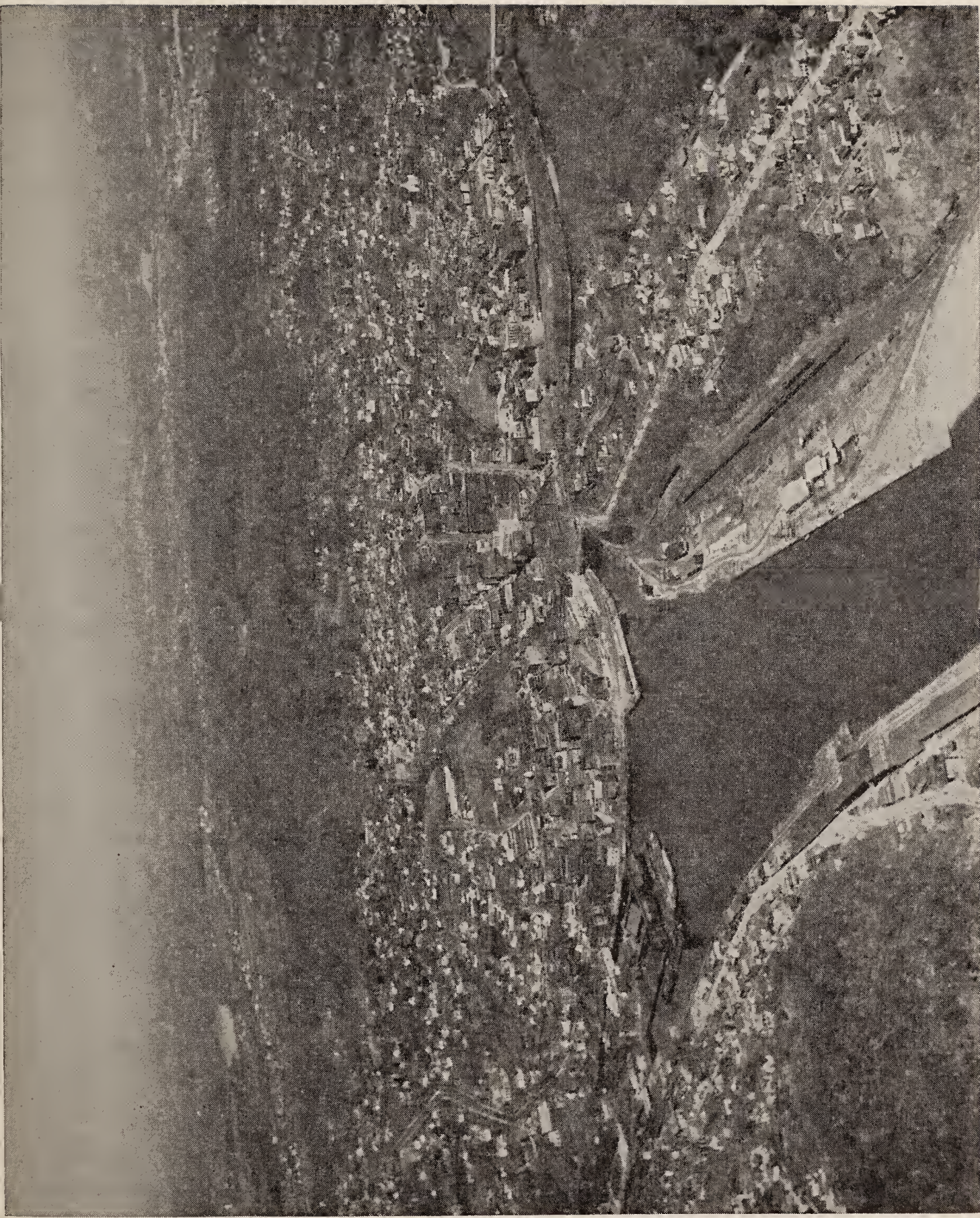
The arguments which followed centered around the right of the General Assembly to investigate election returns when they had been confirmed by the canvassing committee. The Republicans held that the Assembly was invested with this right; the Democrats held that the Assembly had no right except to examine the lists of persons and the votes ascribed to each as presented to it by the Canvassers. In three articles which appeared in the *New Englander and Yale Review* the constitutional and historical basis of the problem was aired.¹⁶ In one of these, Simeon Baldwin cited precedent for examining ballot boxes by authority of the courts and reached the conclusion, with which there seemed to be general agreement, that there was no power to compel the General Assembly to declare the true result of an election.¹⁷

The issues in the disputed election of 1890 were perforce matters for legislative attention. Yet, the Assembly did not rush to alter the method of electing state officers. The Democratic Governor, Luzon B. Morris, in 1893, warned the members of the legislature that "if we are to retain popular government in Connecticut, the Constitution should be so changed that the votes of the people as cast on election day should have their full effect."¹⁸ Morris contended that there was "no good reason" for not electing the executive officers of the state by a plurality

vote.¹⁹ An amendment designed to extend the principle of plurality to the election of state officials was passed by the 1893 session of the Assembly, in 1895, when the Republicans controlled both branches of the Assembly and the Executive Branch, and the amendment was defeated.²⁰ Governor Coffin reminded the Assembly in a cold and matter-of-fact way that an amendment relating to the election of state officers would come before the legislators for approval. Both houses responded by defeating the amendment. However, the action of the 1895 Assembly was reversed by the 1899 Assembly and when the measure came up for final action two years later, Governor George P. McLean recommended the plurality method of electing state officers as "more satisfactory" than the existing "ultra conservative method." The amendment was approved and subsequently ratified by the people.²¹

This concession toward political reform did not allay the persistent demands which had swelled since the election of 1890 for a constitutional convention. There had been an attempt to arouse the people to demand this in 1873. Small concessions had thereafter been granted in amendments of 1874 and 1876. The former granted two representatives to each town with a population of 5,000, and the latter required both a newly incorporated town and the town from which the major portion of its territory was taken to have a minimum of 2,500 population.²² No radical change had occurred since to negate Luzon B. Morris' declaration that the constitution which had been adopted "during the stage-coach era" had become outmoded in an industrial society.²³ The exhortations of a Democratic Governor fell on the deaf ears of Republican Assemblymen. It was a political necessity for the impetus for a constitutional convention to come from the Republican Party.

The disproportionate representation, which was the most frequently articulated argument presented for the calling of a constitutional convention, was at the same time the least feasible politically. Statistic after statistic was presented to show that the less populous regions had a disproportionate representation in both the House and the Senate. On the basis of the census of 1890, it was revealed that towns having less than 15 percent of the population could elect a majority to the lower house. Slight concessions had been made previously in recognition of the growing disparity in population, but the realization that



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the strength of the Republican Party rested with this unit representation remained a basic determinant.²⁴ It was charged that representation in the Senate was similarly disproportionate. Tolland County, for example, had two Senators, which gave it a ratio of one Senator for each 12,057 population, while New Haven County had four Senators, which constituted a ratio of one Senator for each 39,131 population. The extent of representation achieved in the Senate represented a greater divergence of theory and practice than did the representation in the House, for the town and not the individual was the theoretical unit upon which representation in the House was based, but representation in the Senate was supposed to be based upon population.²⁵

It was becoming more and more apparent that there were practices in the operation of the Connecticut system of government which were sorely in need of remedy. Although the Constitution of 1818 represented an attempt to strip the legislature of some of its power, the Assembly had remained an oligarchy in control of the functions of the government. Excesses of the legislature challenged the moral sensibilities of the public in an era when a greater morality was being called for in public affairs and provided the impetus for another constitutional convention. Charges of corruption made by political partisans could be discounted; when corruption centered in the legislature and was evident in its work, as in the granting of special charters, the need for reform pointed to an alteration of the basic structure of government and became of crucial concern.²⁶

In 1895, Governor Coffin noted the "trading of votes between members, with or without reference to the merit of measure," and charged that "some of the influences accompanying, and to a greater or less degree shaping, the legislation of the State have been now and then for years of such character as to constitute a serious offense against the rights and interest of the people."²⁷ Succeeding executives did not direct attention to reform until George P. McLean became Governor. Governor McLean insisted that reform was necessary and held that a proposal to increase the size of the Senate would not suffice, but he opposed the calling of a constitutional convention, expressing the fear that it would "open the door to guest and stranger alike." He attempted to persuade the Assembly that "nothing is so destructive of . . . the general well-

being of society as constant modification of fundamental law, and injustices in a constitution offending theory only may well be preferred to experimental attempts at impossible ideal."²⁸ Perforce, however, reform of the legislature had to await the will of the legislature to reform itself and had to assume the form chosen by the legislature.

Three amendments were presented formally in the General Assembly. Interests of small towns were protected in the proposal that a town with less than 2,500 inhabitants be entitled to only one representative and in another proposal suggesting that two representatives be allowed for the first 2,500 inhabitants and one additional representative for each additional 20,000 inhabitants. Interests of urban centers were focal in the proposal to allow one representative to each town with less than 5,000 inhabitants, two to towns with 10,000 inhabitants, and an additional representative for each additional 10,000 persons or fraction thereof. Agreement could not be reached on acceptance of one of these plans and the Committee on Constitutional Amendments reported in favor of a constitutional convention if this were approved by the electors. Governor McLean decided to support the recommendation of the Committee, believing a convention to be less dangerous than a lack of any action. The Governor, himself a resident of a small town, warned that if small towns ever lost their right of representation it would "be due to their own refusal to so exercise that right that it can be defended by its best friends."²⁹

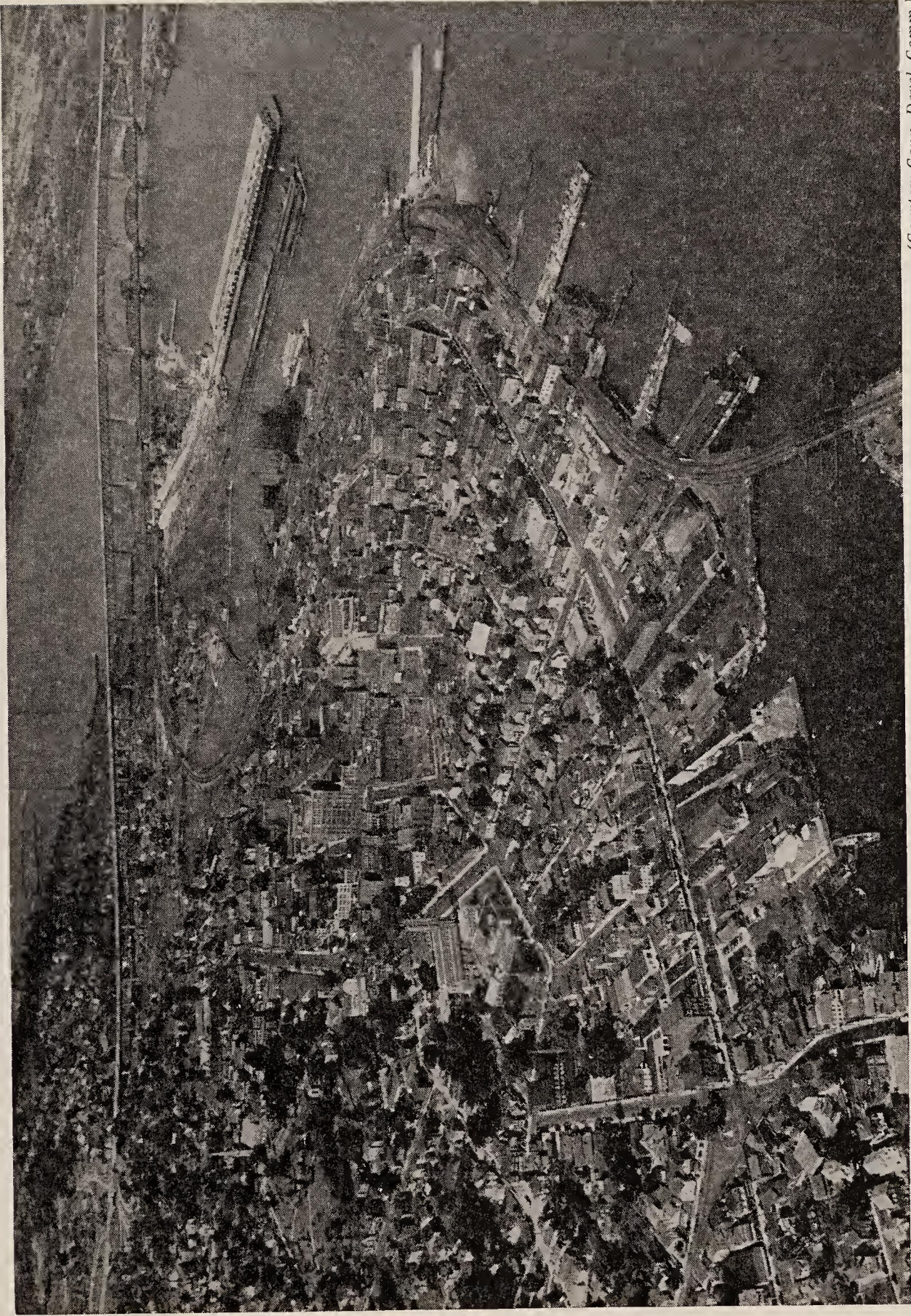
If the rural towns heeded this warning, it was as interpreted in a vote to keep what they possessed as is indicated by the distribution of the vote on the calling on a constitutional convention. In the popular vote, 47,317 favored and 26,745 opposed the calling of the convention. The affirmative margin was derived from the large vote in urban centers, however, for in only 39 of the 168 towns did a majority vote for the convention. Not only did a majority of the towns with a population numbering between 2,500 and 5,000 oppose the calling of a convention, but in only five of the 86 towns which had fewer than 2,500 inhabitants was there a majority vote for the convention. These five towns were Cromwell, Sprague, East Lyme, Burlington, and Colchester. All of the large cities favored the convention by overwhelming majorities, and in only two of those with a population of more than 10,000 were majority

votes cast against it. Although popular vote determined the calling of the convention, membership was composed of one representative from each town. A projection of the town votes, then, indicated that the convention was doomed to failure.³¹

Circulars were distributed throughout the country towns calling upon the residents to protect their birthrights and not allow themselves to be robbed by the cities. It was charged that eight county courts were going to replace the 111 probate courts. Emotions were aroused to such a pitch that some suggested that the convention should adjourn *sine die* as soon as it was organized.³²

The delegates met in Hartford, January 1, 1902. Among the delegates were two former Governors, two former Speakers of the House, four former Secretaries of State, two former Comptrollers, two former Congressmen, one former Chief Justice and the Attorney General. Of the 166 delegates, 102 had served in the legislature; 17, in both houses. One hundred and thirty-eight of the delegates, from the standpoint of ability and experience, were eminently qualified for the service they were delegated to perform. It was this very experience, however, which tied them with the past. Many, in their official capacities, had resisted the very changes which were now being suggested. That there were 122 Republicans and only 44 Democrats among the delegates also assured that the Convention would be dominated by the same political philosophy as that which had controlled Connecticut politics for the last 20 years.³³

The work of this Constitutional Convention was inevitably tied to the history of the Commonwealth. Charles B. Andrews, formerly Governor and Chief Justice, was elected President of the Convention. He reminded its members that in America a constitution is regarded as fundamental, or basic to the structure of government, and is intended to be permanent. Andrews asserted that since the days of Thomas Hooker, Connecticut had held the foundation of authority to be the consent of the people and thought "it was difficult for the student of history" to see where the Fundamental Orders were ever replaced. He pointed out that changes in fundamental principles could not be made without changing the structure of government and asserted that such changes should not be made "except for the very highest reasons." In



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his judgment: "the principles as well as the details of the government under which we have thus far lived are not radically defective. It will be ours to enlarge and confirm rather than to overthrow or deny. . . . Antiquity of time affords added stability to the State and added security to life and possessions." He did not define the purpose of the convention as reform, but rather as consideration of "whether or not any changes should be made" in the constitution, and, if so, what those changes shall be.³⁴

The rules adopted for the conduct of the business of the convention further foredoomed any radical departure from the prevailing governmental arrangements. A crucial decision was made by the adoption of the rule "that no vote adopting any portion or the whole of a proposed constitution shall be passed except by the majority affirmative vote of all of the delegates elected and sworn," rather than by a majority of those meeting quorum requirements and present. This meant that absent delegates cast a negative vote. The vote on the question of allowing one representative from each town and establishing a membership of 60 for the Senate was decided negatively on a vote of 81 affirmatives and 73 negatives: this was four votes short of the 85 necessary for passage.³⁵ The refusal to delegate work to committees and the insistence upon sitting as a committee of the whole encumbered the procedures and impeded the work of the convention. In retrospect, it is apparent that a more expeditious consideration of proposals might have enhanced the chances of the adoption of some.³⁶ The frequent caucuses of the delegates of the several counties flaunted the intent of seating the delegates according to numbers drawn by lot, rather than by the area they represented.³⁷

Of central importance was a decision to determine the formula for representation in the General Assembly. On January 7, it was agreed that the Convention would confine itself to the subject of representation until this was determined. Resolutions on all other questions were tabled and a multitude of proposals, reflecting every shade of opinion on representation, were offered. In February, in the Convention which was sitting as a Committee of the Whole, proponents of equal representation in the House beat back twelve amendments to establish this principle without deciding the number of representatives.³⁸ Angry pro-



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test followed. It was proposed that the Convention be disbanded and that the Governor call for a new election of delegates to represent numbers of electors rather than the electors of towns.³⁹ On the next day agreement was reached on the principle that the Senate should be based on population located in contiguous territory.⁴⁰ Again the determination of size was not made.

When the delegates had convened, prevailing sentiment had supported a plan which came to be known as the Sixty and One, which contemplated one representative from each town and a Senate of 60 members. As the debate wore on, the delegates of the larger towns became disenchanted with the idea, and the proposal lacked newspaper support. By the time the issue was submitted for a formal vote, the chief momentum for the idea was provided in the Convention itself.⁴¹

A committee of 24 was appointed to resolve differences, but was discharged the day after appointment without reaching a consensus. Eventually a committee of nine members, of whom six were from towns which had voted against the calling of the convention, formally recommended on March 12, the Sixty and One Plan. That portion of the resolution pertaining to the Senate passed by the comfortable margin of 101 to 86, but that pertaining to the House received a vote of 84 to 75, one short of the necessary majority of all delegates prescribed by the Convention rule.⁴² Agreement was reached on the other sections of the resolution which were to comprise section three of the Constitution.

Maltbie of Granby then moved the adoption of the article as the vote was 79 to 66 and the motion lost. A move for reconsideration prevailed, however, and the question was made the order of the next day's proceedings. There followed a parliamentary hassle when friends of the article sought to divide it and vote on three separate sections, the last having to do with the method of representation in the House. The Chair ruled in favor of separation and the motion carried by a margin of one on a vote of 86 to 66. A corrected vote the next day added an affirmative vote. This razor-thin margin was almost lost on the motion to act on the resolution as a whole. It was saved, in fact, by the President's ruling that the reconsideration of the several sections was tantamount to reconsideration of the resolution as a whole and Mr. Maltbie was permitted to withdraw the previous motion to that effect.⁴³

It was a Pyrrhic victory. Those who favored the arrangement sought to conclude the Convention quickly. A motion to appoint a committee of five to engross the constitution, to recess until April 3, and to adjourn *sine die* when the committee had reported was defeated.⁴⁴ A committee was appointed on April 2. Since efforts to limit debate failed,⁴⁵ the committee did not report until April 30. On the next day, Sections Three and Four of Article Three, pertaining to representation in the House and Senate, were joined and submitted to vote. A vote of 81 to 70 was four short of the number required for passage, a motion to reconsider failed by a vote of 81 to 73, and a committee charged with resolving differences failed to do so and was dismissed. Tempers were obviously short and apparently were not improved during a week's adjournment. Plan after plan was submitted and defeated. On the last day, when it seemed that the Convention would adjourn without having formulated a plan for submission to the electorate, the President of the Convention spoke in favor of the adoption of a plan submitted by Mr. Bissel of Suffield. This would increase the Senate to 45 and decrease the House by one under a reassignment of representatives in which New Haven would have gained two; Hartford, Bridgeport, and Waterbury, one each; 30 small towns would have lost one representative; and 24 small towns would have gained one. When the plan was submitted, 85 irritated delegates had stalked from the Hall but were persuaded to return. The resolution to submit this plan carried over the opposition of the very large and the very small towns. There was no commitment to support the plan being submitted, nor the enthusiasm necessary to win the support of the electorate.⁴⁶

The proposal was not only the "ridiculous mess" which it was called by a correspondent of the New York *Evening Post*, but also so infeasible that it had no chance for success. The plan submitted to the electorate provided for one representative from each town under 2,000; two for each town of from 2,000 to 50,000, three for each town with a population of from 50,000 to 100,000; four for each town from 100,000 to 150,000, and an additional representative for each additional 50,000 population.⁴⁷ The failure to make any real concession to the large towns assured the defeat of the proposal and a victory for the small towns. Only 15 percent of the electorate voted as compared to 35 percent which

voted on the convocation of the convention. There were 10,377 votes in favor of the proposal and 21,234 votes in opposition.⁴⁸

The failure to ratify the proposed constitution meant more than just the failure to alter the plan of representation. Among the other provisions of the proposed constitution there were many which were progressive and meritorious. For example, the word "religious" was substituted for "Christian" in the Bill of Rights, legislators were denied the privilege of receiving any civil appointments from state officers; the term of probate court judges was to have increased to four years; and the issuance of bonds for municipalities was made dependent upon a vote of the local electorate. In addition, because of the tensions which prevailed over the issue of representation, other ideas of value had been peremptorily tabled. Among these was one suggestion to relieve the legislature of the right to issue special charters; others included initiative and referendum and woman suffrage. Critical journalists have charged that "the cult of conservatism" had disqualified the state "for appreciating the need of adaptation to new conditions." Connecticut chose to recognize "tradition and sentiment" and proceeded to alter, to patch, but not to change the basic framework of government.⁴⁹

The Assembly was not responsive in 1903 to Governor Abram Chamberlain's request that it frame an amendment which would preserve representation for each town, but which would enable the more populous towns to exercise proper influence on all matters of interest to them.⁵⁰ The idea was dead by 1905. Governor Henry Roberts assumed that the reapportionment of the Senate accomplished in 1903 had provided the representation which the more populous areas were demanding and that no further change in the fundamental law was necessary. The reapportioned districts actually varied in population from 19,000 to 42,000. In consequence, in the three most populous counties, three of every four persons elected but two of every three senators.⁵¹ With this settlement, posterity was bequeathed a political imbroglio which is still awaiting the day when those in public life will place political democracy before party.

Some changes were made slowly and reluctantly to meet new conditions. Except as these developed, warned Governor Henry Roberts in 1905, "we have enough laws. . . ." He emphasized his belief that

legislation was "not to be taken as a cure-all for every ill or a substitute for the obligations that self government imposes on the individual citizen."⁵² Fears were expressed that the state was about to abandon its "pay as you go" fiscal policies, but, in fact, it continued to practice a rigid economy. In consistency with this practice and within the existent framework of government, some forward-looking legislation was enacted in years before World War I. The state remained tender to the encroachments of the Federal Government, but not insensitive to the forces of national progress.⁵³

The prosperity of the nineteenth century carried over into the twentieth, but was interrupted by the Panic of 1907. The population increased about 23 percent, and most of the economic indices of the state increased even more. Railroad valuations increased 38 percent; the value of farm products, 41 percent; savings bank deposits, 60 percent; and the dollar value of manufacturing equipment, 70 percent. These were prosperous years which created unbounded confidence in the future expansion of industry. Speculation was rampant, and the Panic of 1907 was the result. For a brief period, gold went into hiding. The effect of the depression on the business and manufacturing enterprises became pronounced in the latter part of the year and was reflected in a decrease in the value of the gross manufactured product from 235 million in 1907 to 185 million in 1908 and in an average decrease in the hours of labor by 12.8 percent. By the early months of 1908, the economy was on the road to recovery. The years until 1915 witnessed a continuous economic growth.⁵⁴ The shock of the Panic, nonetheless, had prompted the Assembly to take measures to conserve its resources and to review its provisions for health and welfare, and, in this, Connecticut acted in conformity to the national impulse.

Specific steps were taken by the Connecticut Assembly to protect its forests and to reforest its waste lands. The forests of the state had been all but denuded as a result of the expansion of the lumber industry, which, by the end of the nineteenth century was cutting more than one hundred million feet a year. The demands for telephone poles, railroad ties, and other industrial needs had resulted in the cutting of the woodlands at so rapid a rate that nature's provisions for the regulation of the flow of water had largely been destroyed. The state became

cognizant of the importance of its forests to both its industry and its public health. The Agricultural Experiment Station added a forester to its staff in 1901 and began a land acquisition program as an object lesson in the tree planting and in the proper management of woodlands. The legislature continued to appropriate monies for the acquisition of waste lands and for their reforestation and for the control of forest fires. The process was slow, but by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the 1,331,000 acres of forest lands represented 42 percent of the total land area of the state and had increased by 100,000 acres in that ten years. By the end of World War II, over 60 percent of the land area of the state was forested.⁵⁵

In the care of the unfortunate, there was a further tendency for the state to discontinue its reliance on private institutions and to erect and to operate its own. For the care of the mentally ill, Norwich Hospital was authorized in 1903 to supplement the previously established Middletown institution. The fight against mental illness was to receive further impetus when, through the efforts of Clifford Beers, the Mental Hygiene Movement was inaugurated.⁵⁶ A school for epileptics was opened in Mansfield in 1914, and, in the same year, the state purchased the school operated by the Knight family for over half a century and named it the Connecticut School for Imbeciles. A most intense effort was made to care for those afflicted with tuberculosis. To supersede the traditional method of appropriating money to private institutions, a comprehensive law for the care of those afflicted with tuberculosis was drawn in 1909. A state tuberculosis commission was appointed with authority to build three sanatoria. The first was established at Meriden in 1910, and shortly thereafter others were established at Newington and at Shelton.⁵⁷ Although no radical changes had been made in the jail system, Connecticut, in the first part of the twentieth century, was relatively advanced in penal administration, having introduced the indeterminate sentence, the maximum sentence of 30 years for a third offense, the law authorizing operation for the prevention of procreation and the probation law.⁵⁸ To separate first offenders from the more dangerous criminals, the Connecticut Reformatory for men was established in 1913; and one for women in 1917.⁵⁹

As important as were these advances, the state did not extend its

responsibility into the effective regulation of those institutions which, although private, were of importance to the public welfare. After the needs of the insurance companies had been met by the legislature, it was charged that control of the Assembly was handed over to Charles S.



(Courtesy of the Hospital)

NORWICH—NORWICH STATE HOSPITAL

Mellen, the head of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad, who was ably represented at the Capitol by J. Henry Roraback. Through the efforts of these two men, the general railroad act was virtually abolished and measures which they judged confiscatory were effectively blocked. Roraback's influence extended to the utility companies, which continued to secure special privileges through special charters. The establishment of a regulatory commission was delayed until its necessity could no longer be denied. When the century had opened there was hardly a city in the state which did not have a local

organization dedicated to the promotion and the protection of business, and the Connecticut Business Men's Association had been organized in 1899. Connecticut continued, in the early decades of the twentieth century, to be a business man's community and this was reflected in political affairs.⁶⁰

The political party system was failing to serve the interests of the people of the community. On the one hand, the state Democratic Party was badly managed, disorganized, and ineffective.⁶¹ The alliance with labor which had developed was more indicative of things to come than of effective party organization, although, through it, the control of some of the municipal governments was gained.⁶² On the other hand, the Republicans "had grown corpulent and complacent in office." For 15 years, from 1895 to 1910, Republican leaders had succeeded each other to high office as one after another progressed to Lieutenant Governor and finally to Governor and then stepped aside to permit another of the faithful to assume his position on the "ladder of preferment."⁶³ It was charged that the small towns, which remained the bulwark of Republican control, were chosen fields for political manipulators. The "rotary system" of representation in the small towns made them more susceptible to management in the caucuses and in the primaries. "If a few can fix the primary to their advantage, the respectable citizens can be trusted to do gratuitously the rest of the fixing at the polls," charged Dr. Newman Smyth of New Haven, who gave expression to his opposition to "practical politics" in his unsuccessful campaign in 1905 against Morgan Bulkeley and Samuel Fessenden for the senatorial position left vacant by Senator Hawley. The picture Smyth painted of Bulkeley's public life aroused a popular protest, but did not penetrate the inner councils of the Republican caucus. Bulkeley was the party's nominee.⁶⁴ Dissension within Republican ranks was insufficient to give victory to the Democrats; defection from Republican ranks was required.

A rift developed in the Republican Party in 1910 over the selection of a nominee for Governor when Charles Goodwin, Secretary to the incumbent Governor and member of a socially prominent Hartford family, challenged Lieutenant Governor Everett J. Lake, the heir apparent and the choice of the "regular" faction of the party. Money appeared to flow freely as politicians beat a path to and from the Allyn

House where both factions had their headquarters. Republicans were embarrassed at their own machinations when the first ballot of the convention revealed one more vote than the total number of delegates. Ballots found on the convention floor were further evidence of wrong



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

WATERBURY

doing. A recount was demanded. On the second ballot, Goodwin received 295 votes; Lake, 285. The charges of "purchase and sale" marred the party's posture of respectability at a time when the Democrats came up with their strongest candidate in years.⁶⁵

Simeon E. Baldwin was a member of one of Connecticut's more illustrious families, a graduate of Yale and of Harvard Law School, a lawyer, scholar, and Justice of the State's Supreme Court of Errors, and a Republican turned Democrat. In 1910, he stood as challenger of the

Republican position. Baldwin did not exploit the unsavory practices of the Republican Convention, but shifted the campaign to national issues, attacking the tariff and the encroachment of Federal authority. Nevertheless, he interpreted his majority of 3,600 votes as indicating "that a majority of the people, while standing by their party in general, were ready to sacrifice its chosen leader to testify unmistakably their disapproval of its management. . . ." Baldwin did not seek to revolutionize Connecticut society while he was in office (1911-1915). Largely due to the inroads the Progressives made into the regular Republican Party, the Democrats controlled the Senate during Baldwin's second term, but still he continued to approach public affairs with a studied cautiousness.⁶⁷

Indeed, there was much of Baldwin's political philosophy which seemed more in harmony with that of the Connecticut republicanism than with Wilsonian progressivism. He called for even greater economy in government and failed to endorse the income tax because of the fear of the effect a tax on bonds would have on the borrowing power of the state. A national magazine described Baldwin's first inaugural address as "a perfunctory endorsement of the party platform" which contained recommendations "which are progressive in their leaning, but not thorough." The more liberal element of his own party criticized Baldwin for his failure to press vigorously for progressive reforms; the former Republican Governor, Rollin S. Woodruff, gave unqualified support to Baldwin's program. The *New York Times* adjudged Baldwin the most conservative Democrat then in an important position.⁶⁸

The criticisms notwithstanding there were advances during Baldwin's tenure of office. The honesty of elections was further assured in 1911 through the strengthening of the corrupt practices act. A plan was devised for redistricting the five congressional districts. The constitutional amendment passed by the 1909 session of the General Assembly to prevent any further legislative sessions from continuing beyond an early date in June was approved for submission to the people. Of lasting importance was the civil service law passed in 1913 which placed practically all of the state employees, except common laborers and holders of elective and appointive positions, on the merit system. The evils of special legislation were lessened by the passage in 1913 of

several general laws, such as the one permitting banks and trusts to incorporate and another designed to increase the self-governing power of cities by permitting them through referendum to vote the issuance of bonds for civic purposes. Also, an amendment was approved in 1913 to forbid special legislation in any case where the matter could be covered by general law.⁶⁹

More indicative of the state's willingness to assume greater supervisory responsibilities was the passage of the public utilities act in 1911. With the expansion of transportation and communication facilities and particularly with the increased use of electric power, the safeguarding of the extraordinary power that was granted by the several charters had become immensely complex. A special commission named in the 1907 session of the General Assembly had recommended the establishment of a permanent commission, and both parties in the 1910 campaign had endorsed the proposal. To counter the familiar charges that such an act would empower the commission to take private property without due process of law, it was provided that decisions of the commission would be subject to appeal to the Superior Court. The bill provided for a uniform method of incorporation, control of capitalization, definition of territory, regulation of the right of eminent domain, examination of financial conditions of the physical plant, and any other conditions deemed necessary to assure that such utilities would serve the public interest.⁷⁰

Of equal importance was the move to take the state's highway program out of politics. The automobile by 1910 had become "a valuable engine of commerce . . . a distributor of wealth" which had contributed much to the state's prosperity.⁷¹ Concentration on the improvement of roads dated from the creation of the Highway Commission in 1895. The initial objective was the provision of hard-surfaced, farm to market roads, for the movement of commerce and the development of the state's natural resources. Roadways were drained and trap rock was applied to designated areas. During the first ten years, the state contributed approximately one and one half million dollars and the towns approximately one million dollars for road improvement. By 1907, 150 towns had entered into the program. Characteristically, the state's responsibility was at first limited to supervision. The towns selected the

roads to be improved, advertised for bids, let the contracts, and provided for maintenance.⁷² Inevitably under such circumstances there resulted a series of non-permanent, unconnected roads which were frequently undertaken in response to the pressures of localities. James H. MacDonald, a member of the original commission who had been named Commissioner, was considered largely responsible by Baldwin for the inadequacies of the program. In 1910, the Republicans, who controlled the General Assembly, blocked an effort to remove MacDonald by stripping the Governor of his power to appoint the Highway Commissioner. MacDonald continued in office until 1913. The partisan nature of the question was revealed when the Republicans blocked the appointment of William H. Caldwell, but accepted the nomination of Charles H. Bennet. The new commissioner was regarded as a sound engineer and is considered to have developed a permanent and sound highway program.⁷³

Of the social problems confronting Connecticut at the turn of the century, none was of greater importance, perhaps, than the relative status of the wage earner. While the right to strike was recognized, unemployment was generally regarded as indicative of a lack of individual initiative, rather than as a social problem. State assistance to the unemployed was limited to that offered by the inadequate and understaffed agencies located in the larger cities. Relief was the work of local charities. Arbitration was viewed as a desirable method of settling labor disputes, but the State Board of Arbitration and Mediation lacked the power to call the necessary witnesses to carry on a thorough investigation.⁷⁴ Baldwin, as Justice of the Superior Court, handed down the decision in the *William H. Hoxie vs. The New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad* case which declared unconstitutional a section of the Federal Employees Liability Act which fixed the liability for accidents caused by a fellow employee as the responsibility of the employer.⁷⁵ Governor Lilley, in 1909, recognized the possible justice of the act, but feared that it would place Connecticut at a disadvantage with states which did not adhere to the law.⁷⁶ On the eve of the Panic of 1907, there were approximately 200,000 wage earners in the state whose average annual income was \$481.37.⁷⁷

There was developing, nevertheless, partially as a result of the

efforts of citizen's groups, such as the Consumers' League, public awareness of the status of the wage earner. The League, which attracted to its membership the socially prominent, was outraged at the condition of the wage earner, but refused to assign the sole responsibility for his status to the factory owners. The Connecticut branch of this league, in 1902, investigated the actual conditions of the wage earner, published reports, and sponsored bills in the General Assembly. A permanency was given to the organization in 1907 when it employed as General Secretary Miss Mary Crowell Welles, who was a graduate of Smith and who held a doctorate from Yale. Despite the efforts of the League and of other groups, Connecticut was lagging behind other areas of the western world in its labor legislation, particularly in relation to the liability of an employer for an injury to an employee.⁷⁸

Compensation to a wage earner in the event of an accident was coming to be regarded as a right to be guaranteed by society rather than a claim to be exacted of employers through court action. Although legal recourse had been taken in an effort to protect Connecticut industry from the application of the federal Employer's Liability Act, a special committee was appointed in 1907 to recommend such legislation as was believed proper "to regulate the liability of employers to accidents to employees." The Assembly of 1909 did not act favorably upon the modifications recommended by the committee. While Baldwin in his inaugural, recommended the enactment of the bill, he suggested that if the existent bill were not altered, employees might be more willing to accept the principles of workingmen's compensation.⁷⁹ The Governor could hardly have been surprised when the two houses could not agree on such an act. In recognition, as he stated, of bringing into accord the theories of modern sociology and economics and the guarantees of individual rights, he suggested insurance as a means by which workingmen's compensation, in fact, became a reality in the 1913 session of the Assembly.⁸⁰ Employers were made liable for accidents in their establishments regardless of the cause, and mutual insurance associations were established by the employers to finance the payments.⁸¹

The 1913 session was hailed for the labor legislation enacted. In addition to the Workmen's Compensation Act, the post of Industrial Investigator was established and an Industrial Commission was ap-

pointed to investigate the conditions of the wage-earning women. The child labor laws were strengthened, and provisions were made for eliminating health hazards. To some, the state seemed likely to take the lead in an area in which it had lagged for so long.⁸²

Connecticut, on the eve of World War I, gave evidence of being willing for those chosen as national representatives to reflect the popular will, but guarded jealously the traditions of Connecticut government. The Assembly of 1913 endorsed the direct election of United States Senators and transmitted to Congress a resolution calling for the direct election of the President and Vice President. On the other hand, Baldwin, in an effort to establish a more proportionate representation for the large towns, was unable to secure support for a proposal that the state Senators would be elected at-large as they had been from 1644 to 1818. The Assembly steadfastly refused to surrender any of its prerogatives and defeated attempts to require a two-thirds vote of each house to override a Governor's veto and refused a proposed amendment to the constitution which would have prohibited the General Assembly from appointing any of its own members to any state office.⁸³ Whereas the war itself created a climate wherein social ideologies flourished, the attention of the public was directed more toward the winning of the contest and its impact on their daily lives.

NOTES—CHAPTER XXIX

- ¹ Norton, "Governors of Connecticut," *Connecticut Magazine*, 1903-04, pp. 209, 214, 216-7, 219-24; Melbert B. Cary, "The Connecticut Constitution" (New Haven, 1900), p. 36.
- ² Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 84-86.
- ³ Newman Smyth, "Political Corruption in Connecticut," *The Outlook*, Vol. 79, March 18, 1905, p. 690; Norton, "Governors of Connecticut," *Connecticut Magazine*, Vol. 8, pp. 214, 219-24.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 209-13, 217-19.
- ⁵ Public Documents, 1880, Vol. I, pp. 13-15.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 1889, Vol. I, pp. 16-17.
- ⁹ Public Documents, 1889, Vol. I, pp. 16-17.
- ¹⁰ Cary, *The Connecticut Constitution*, pp. 46-49.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*; Public Documents, 1884, pp. 4-5.
- ¹² Norton, "Governors of Connecticut," *Connecticut Magazine*, pp. 209-24; *Register and Manual of the State of Connecticut*.
- ¹³ Cary, *The Connecticut Constitution*, pp. 41-46.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-42.

- ¹⁵ Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. II, Osborn, "Political Progress," pp. 29-32; Jackson, Baldwin, pp. 87-88, Hon. Lynde Harrison, "The Election Controversy in Connecticut," *New Englander and Yale Review*, Vol. 54, April 1891, pp. 354-65; Simeon Baldwin, "The Late Election in Connecticut," in *ibid.*, pp. 366-73.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, and Harrison, "The Election Controversy," *New Englander and Yale Review*, Vol. 54, April, 1891, pp. 354-65.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, and Baldwin, "The Late Election," *New Englander and Yale Review*, Vol. 54, April, 1891, pp. 366-73.
- ¹⁸ Public Documents, 1893, Vol. I, pp. 7-8.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ²⁰ Charles H. Clark, "The Connecticut Convention," *The Yale Review*, Vol. 11, (old series), 1903, New Haven, August, 1902, p. 146; Public Documents, 1895, Vol. I, p. 27.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*; Public Documents, 1900, Vol. I, p. 9.
- ²² *The Constitutions of Connecticut; Notes and Statistics Regarding Town Representation in the General Assembly and Documents Relating to the Constitutional Convention of 1902* (Hartford, 1901), p. 107.
- ²³ Public Documents, Vol. I, p. 4.
- ²⁴ Cary, *The Connecticut Constitution*, pp. 15-33; Public Documents, 1893, Vol. I, pp. 3-6.
- ²⁵ Cary, *The Connecticut Constitution*, p. 21.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-45.
- ²⁷ Public Documents, 1895, Vol. I, pp. 27-28; Ratcliffe Hicks, *Speeches and Correspondence of Ratcliffe Hicks* (Cambridge, 1896), p. 43.
- ²⁸ Public Documents, 1900, pp. 3-10.
- ²⁹ *The Constitutions of Connecticut*, pp. 67-73.
- ³⁰ John H. Perry, "Constitutional Convention of 1902," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. I, pp. 473-74; *Constitutions of Connecticut*, pp. 112-28.
- ³¹ Clark, "The Connecticut Convention," *The Yale Review*, August, 1902, p. 151.
- ³² *Ibid.*, pp. 151, 159; Perry, "Constitutional Convention of 1902," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. I, pp. 473-80.
- ³³ *Journal of the Constitutional Convention of Connecticut, 1902* (Hartford, 1902), pp. 9-12.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 25, 381; Clark, "The Connecticut Convention," *The Yale Review*, August, 1902, p. 154.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-34.
- ³⁶ *Journal of the Constitutional Convention*, p. 16.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-107.
- ³⁸ Clark, "The Connecticut Convention," *The Yale Review*, August, 1902, p. 154.
- ³⁹ *Journal of the Constitutional Convention*, pp. 113-14.
- ⁴⁰ Clark, "The Connecticut Convention," *The Yale Review*, August, 1902, p. 153.
- ⁴¹ *Journal of the Constitutional Convention*, pp. 131-187.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 186-225.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 234-35.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 295.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 225-443; Clark, "The Connecticut Convention," *The Yale Review*, August, 1902, p. 158; *The Outlook*, Vol. 71, May 24, 1902, p. 198.
- ⁴⁶ *Journal of the Constitutional Convention*, pp. 434-35; *The Outlook*, Vol. 71, May 24, 1902, pp. 331-32.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, June 28, 1902, pp. 331-32.
- ⁴⁸ *Journal of the Constitutional Convention*, pp. 54, 64, 95, 119, 249, 282, 327, 342, 362; *The Outlook*, June 27, 1902, pp. 531-32.
- ⁴⁹ Public Documents, 1902, Vol. I, p. 6.

- ⁵¹ Public Documents, 1904, Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 3; Rowland L. Mitchell, Jr., "Social Legislation in Connecticut, 1919-1939," (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Yale University, 1954), p. 63.
- ⁵² Message of the Governor, 1905 (Hartford, 1904), in Public Documents, 1904, Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 37.
- ⁵³ Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. i, 78, 280; Message of the Governor, 1909 (Hartford, 1909), in Public Documents, 1908, Jackson, *Baldwin*, p. 170.
- ⁵⁴ Bancroft, *Connecticut State Finances*, pp. 36-42; Message of the Governor, 1905, pp. 4-9; Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (Hartford, 1908), in Public Documents, 1908, Vol. I, pp. 91-127.
- ⁵⁵ Eugene Vernon Zumwalt, "Taxation and Other Factors Affecting Private Forestry in Connecticut," (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Yale University, 1951), pp. 9, 51-58; Austin F. Hawes, "Forestry, the Salvation of Wornout Connecticut Towns," *New England Magazine*, Vol. 39, September, 1908-February, 1909, p. 21; Message of the Governor, 1903 (Hartford, 1903), in Public Documents, 1902, Vol. I, Pt. 2, pp. 16-18; Message of the Governor, 1909 (Hartford, 1909), in Public Documents, 1908, Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 20.
- ⁵⁶ Capen, "Connecticut Institutions," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. V, p. 427; Osterweis, *New Haven*, p. 399.
- ⁵⁷ Capen, "Connecticut Institutions," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. V, p. 441.
- ⁵⁸ *The Survey*, Vol. 26, 1911, p. 313.
- ⁵⁹ Capen, "Connecticut Institutions," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, Vol. V, pp. 459-60; Message of the Governor, 1909, p. 11.
- ⁶⁰ Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," p. 159; Don C. Seitz, "Connecticut, A Nation in Miniature," *The Nation*, Vol. 116, Apr. 18, 1923, p. 462; Allen B. MacMurphy, "Revolt in Connecticut," *The Nation*, Vol. 131, Sept. 10, 1930, p. 263; Message of the Governor, 1909, pp. 9-10.
- ⁶¹ Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 159-60.
- ⁶² Alfred Howe, "Connecticut's Labor Mayors," *Independent*, Vol. 55, p. 1260; Don C. Seitz, "Connecticut, A Nation in Miniature," *The Nation*, Vol. 116, Apr. 18, 1923, p. 462.
- ⁶³ Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 161-62.
- ⁶⁴ Newman Smyth, "Political Corruption in Connecticut," *The Outlook*, Mar. 18, 1905, Vol. 79, pp. 690-92; "The Connecticut Senatorship," *The Outlook*, Vol. 79, Jan. 14, 1905, pp. 98-99.
- ⁶⁵ Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 161-63.
- ⁶⁷ Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 164-170, 189-90.
- ⁶⁸ Message of the Governor, 1911 (Hartford, 1911), in Public Documents, 1910, Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 3-41; Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 173-77, 184; "Governor Baldwin's Inaugural," *The Outlook*, Jan. 14, 1911, Vol. 197, pp. 45-46.
- ⁶⁹ Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 170-94; Report of the Civil Service Commission (Hartford, 1918), in Public Documents, 1918, Vol. I, Pt. 2, p. 6; Report of the Civil Service Commission (Hartford, 1920), in Public Documents, 1920, Vol. I, Pt. 2, p. 5.
- ⁷⁰ Message of the Governor, 1909, p. 9.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- ⁷² Staff of the Highway Department, "Forty Years of Highway Development in Connecticut," Tercentenary Commission of Connecticut (New Haven, n. d.), pp. 5-7; Message of the Governor, 1905, p. 28; Message of the Governor, 1907, p. 10.
- ⁷³ Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 177, 192; Seitz, "Connecticut, A Nation in Miniature," *The Nation*, Vol. 116, Apr. 18, 1923, p. 462.

- 74 Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 28-29; Message of the Governor, 1905, p. 22.
- 75 Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 111-12.
- 76 Message of the Governor, 1909, p. 15. The Supreme Court of the U. S. subsequently overruled Baldwin's decision.
- 77 Message of the Governor, 1905, p. 22.
- 78 Message of the Governor, 1911, pp. 20-24; Jackson, *Baldwin*, p. 192.
- 79 Message of the Governor, 1911, pp. 20-24.
- 80 Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 178-79.
- 81 *Ibid.*, p. 192.
- 82 Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 68-73.
- 83 Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 177-95.

Chapter XXX

Citizen and Soldier, World War I

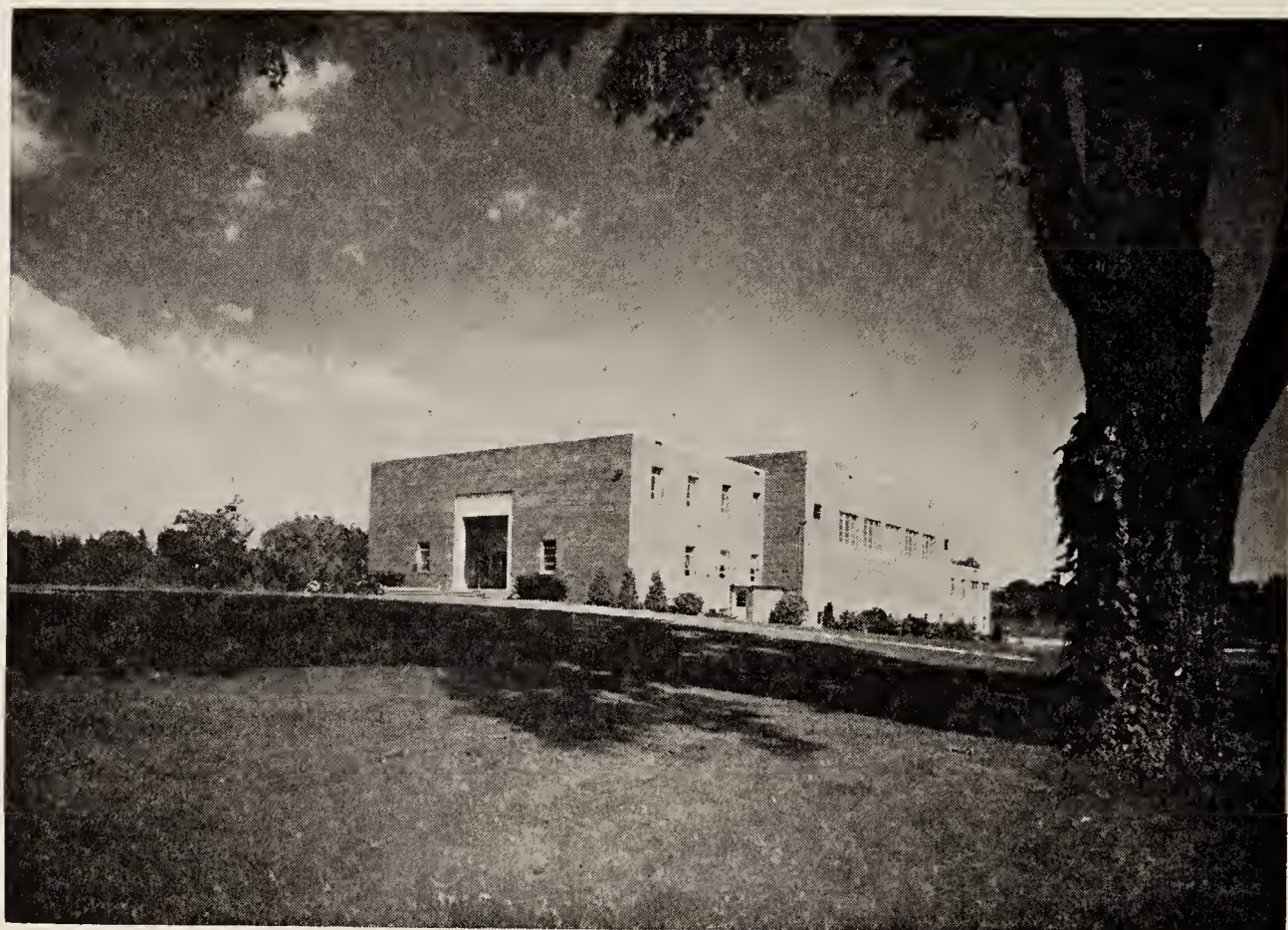
THE IMPORT of the outbreak of the European war in 1914 intruded slowly upon Connecticut's consciousness. The course of events which resulted in the march of the German army through the Low Countries in August competed for headlines with George Stallings and his Boston Braves who had begun their miraculous drive for the baseball championship of the world. Although the war stories pushed the political campaign of 1914 from the front page, Governor Holcombe, in his inaugural address, January, 1915, reflected an American as well as a Connecticut attitude by his failure to consider the possibility that this country might become actively engaged in the war.¹ Westville citizens submitted to the President their own plan for stopping the war by suggesting to the President that the flow of food-stuffs to Europe be stopped. A sense of the implications of the impending struggle was transmitted by the Connecticut tourists who related their harrowing experiences in escaping the war zones and in securing passage home. A greater awareness of the war developed, too, as munitions contracts flowed into the state.²

Connecticut was well situated to handle the war orders which flooded the state.³ It was natural for the munitions purchaser to turn to manufacturers with established reputations in the manufacture of materials of war. In Connecticut, these included Colt, Winchester, Remington, and Marlin. Those engaged in related industries quickly converted to the manufacture of bombs, shells and other necessities of war.⁴ The impetus provided by the war resulted in a tripling of the rate of construction of industrial facilities in the years from 1914 to 1916 as compared to the previous two years.⁵ To the state's population of one and one-quarter million was added a steady stream of laborers from the eastern seaboard states, from Canada, and from the middlewest.⁶

The booming munitions trade brought the populace ever closer to war. Trade relations made Connecticut residents more receptive to the English propagandists, while the efforts of Germany to halt the trade with the allies transgressed, not only upon the rights of a neutral, but also posed a threat to the state's booming prosperity. As the industrial interests expanded, rumors of Germany's using the state as a base for the operation of its saboteurs created alarm. The sinking of the *Lusitania* in May, 1915, and of the *Sussex* in March, 1916, further aroused bitterness against Germany. Calls for preparedness were dramatized by parades in most of the larger cities and were opposed with equal vehemence by the Society to Enforce Peace. The attention of the populace was temporarily deflected from the international crisis when the state militia was ordered to assist in the patrol of the Mexican border. However, with Germany's announcement in January, 1917, of the resumption of submarine warfare, Governor Holcombe moved boldly to prepare the defenses of the state.⁷

An assessment of the military potential of the state was made, even before the United States declared war, through an inventory of the men and materials available within the state in the event of war. In response to the Governor's appeal on February 6, a corps of volunteers, including civic leaders, public officials, and hundreds of public-spirited citizens, was enlisted to make the survey. The facilities of the insurance companies, including their machines and operators, were made available. Within two weeks, 10,000 agents had been commissioned to make the enumeration of those of military age, and the work was practically completed by the middle of March.⁸ The concentration of population in urban communities at one and the same time made the process more complex and made a more complete enumeration possible. Hartford is generally recognized as having most nearly perfected its method of enumeration. Those on the voting list and the poll tax list were first identified and then checked against the city directory and the school list. All the large employment units, including the insurance companies, the department stores, and the factories were canvassed. One foreman in a New Haven factory was credited with enumerating 17,000 workers in less than one hour.⁹ In some instances, as in a New Haven factory, there were those who refused to answer the questions, but were soon appre-

hended by their fellow workers. In other instances citizens organized an informal detective force and ferreted out those who escaped the count.¹⁰ By such methods a nearly complete census of the war potential of the cities was obtained.



(Courtesy Danbury Chamber of Commerce)

DANBURY—THE WAR MEMORIAL BUILDING

The rural towns responded equally well, but not without incident. Selectmen were made responsible by the direction of the Governor, and shortly there were volunteers in sufficient numbers to make the count. One Selectman who reported that his district was made up of “old hayseeds and young hyphens, neither of whom were in the least degree interested in anything like patriotism . . .” was embarrassed when a Hartford lawyer invaded the town and worked up a red-hot mass meeting and enrolled practically every one of military age. In some of the small towns poll tax enumerators, who had “been in the habit of splitting their fee of six cents per name” with those whom they enumerated,

laughed at the military census taker who tried to tell they were working for nothing and "consequently did not have the three cents divvy to hand out." These and similar problems were quickly settled from Hartford, and there resulted a military census which served as a model for many other states.¹¹

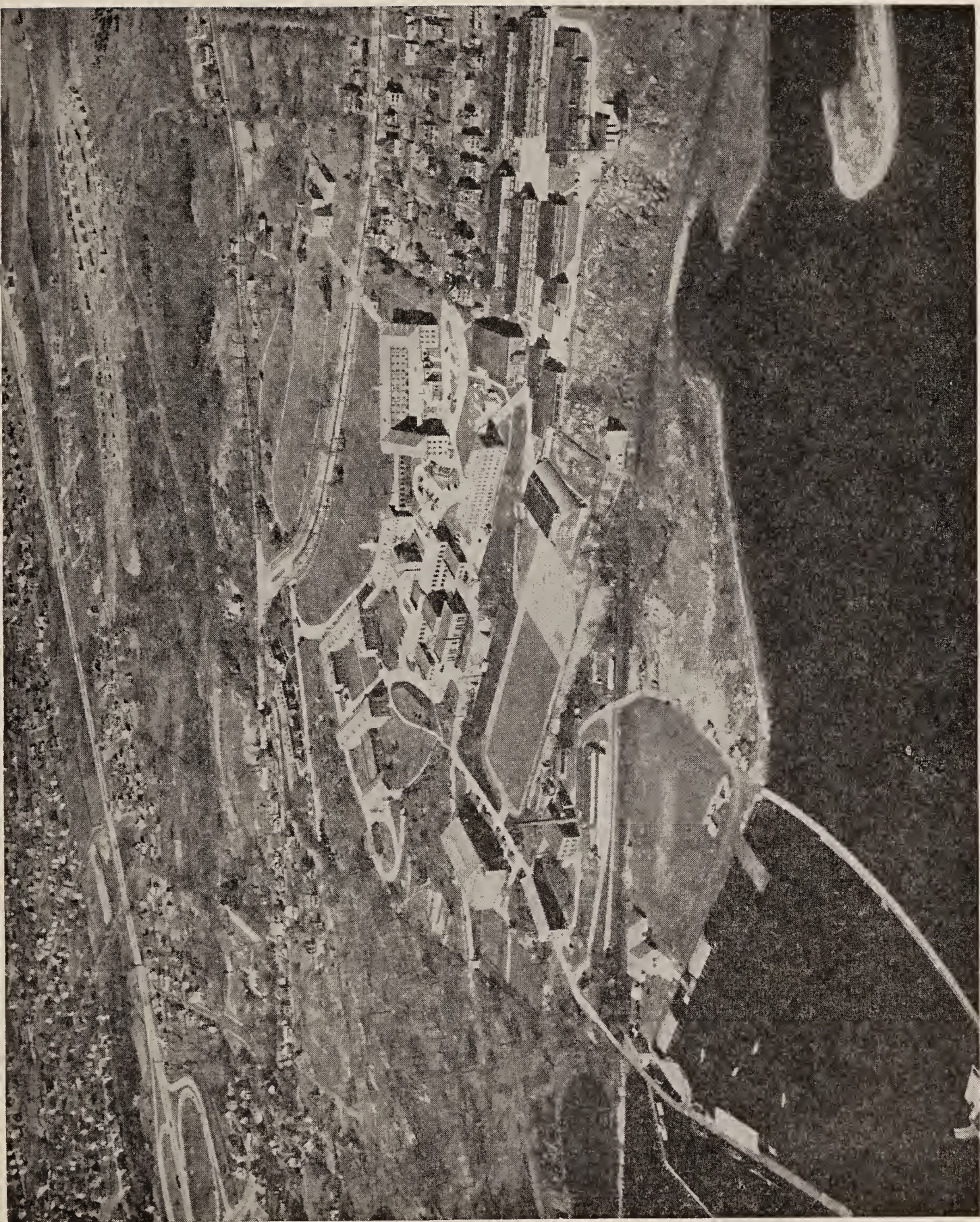
While the military census was in process, steps were taken to protect the state against any eventuality by the organization of the Home Guard. Within three months after authorization was granted on March 9, 1917, a force of 20,000 men were enlisted, half of whom were equipped. In addition to providing effective defense for the important industrial establishment, the force answered five alarms and participated enthusiastically in liberty loan drives and recruiting campaigns.¹²

The mobilization of state troops was begun in the latter part of March and proceeded at an accelerated pace when volunteering was abandoned as a method of meeting the requirements of a national army and the selective service system was inaugurated. The National Guard, the First Regiment of which was called into service on March 25, 1917, was dispatched for patrol duty at bridges, power stations, and other key points throughout the state. The impulse to volunteer was blunted by demands that there be created a system of universal military training. This was enacted by Congress on May 18. In accordance with provisions of the Selective Service Act, inductees were to be selected by lot from classes determined by personal histories derived from the compulsory registration of all citizens between the ages of 21 and 30. The identification of these was made under the direction of the Attorney General by boards of volunteers organized in every town and hamlet in the state. The available manpower was reduced somewhat by the provision that aliens, of whom there were many in Connecticut, could not be inducted. Many aliens, however, became citizens and helped to fill the state's quota. During the course of the war, a total of 34,574 inductees were forwarded by the local boards to the several camps and were accepted by the War Department. Approximately as many more were classified for general or limited service.¹³ By August the First Regiment of the National Guard was joined by the Second in New Haven to bring the total strength to more than 4,000 officers and men. These forces included the 102nd Infantry, 26th Division, more popularly known

as the "Yankee" Division. The 102nd trained in the shadow of the Yale Bowl until they entrained for Montreal, from which they sailed on September 19. They were followed by artillery and machine gun units on October 9, by additional companies as American forces assumed the character of a fighting unit, and by still others as the exigencies of war required further replacements.¹⁴

Upon the outbreak of war, attention was immediately focussed on the aliens among the state's population. Registration revealed 58,596 men of foreign birth, between the ages of 21 and 31, in the state. At a moment when the unified effort of the whole country was needed, it was learned that there were many unassimilated groups who were unfamiliar with American ideals. In contrast, there were found among the aliens thousands of the state's most loyal citizens: over 27,000 were reported to be in the selective service draft. A vast Americanization program indicated that unfamiliarity with American precepts in many cases was traceable to society's neglect of the alien. Although the alien's immunity to the draft was cause for occasional irritation, it was the potential threat to industrial production which caused the greatest concern. The problem was made more acute by Connecticut's proximity to the great ports of entry and by the fact that the state was a center of the munitions industry. Immediate steps were taken in many of the factories to identify the alien. At the Winchester Arms Factory, for example, not only was a census ordered, but workers from Germany and Austria were to be dropped from employment pending further investigation. Those identified as enemy aliens were prohibited from living near munitions plants on orders from the Department of Justice.¹⁵

As troop trains pulled out of railroad stations bearing Connecticut sons to replenish the fighting forces, members of the soldiers' families became engaged in a host of volunteer activities which bolstered the morale of the home front while making some contribution to the war effort. To lessen the possibility that the soldiers would have to go without food, meatless and sugarless days were observed, and some of the finest lawns in the community were devoted to raising corn and potatoes. Thousands of women cut and rolled bandages, prepared baskets for overseas, and marched in parades. The Knights of Columbus Fund was subscribed in an amount three times its allotment, and the quotas



NEW LONDON—COAST GUARD ACADEMY

(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

for the Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A. were more than met. Representatives of these groups went overseas carrying tidings from home while contributing to the general war effort.¹⁶

Connecticut residents contributed to the financing of the war through the purchase of liberty bonds. The subscription was greatly increased because of the encouragement of the factories, the insurance companies, and the savings banks. The last introduced the then novel partial payment plan. The state exceeded its quota for the first and second Liberty Loans by 25 percent.¹⁷ The state was honored for selling the largest amount of any state in the Union, subscribing to a total of \$437,475,103 during the War.¹⁸

After the United States entered the war, it became necessary to coordinate the state's war effort with that of the United States government. A state Council of National Defense was appointed on April 26, and local committees were named in every town in the state. The primary function of the State Committee on Food Supply was to increase and conserve the agricultural resources of the state, but the most important of the services which it performed were the preparation of a census of nurses in the state who were to be on call in the event of an emergency and the organization of a motor pool which was available on call.¹⁹ An importance attached to the home front activities and certainly Connecticut contributed its share, including its share of heroes, to the American Expeditionary Force, nevertheless, the truly distinctive feature of Connecticut's contribution to World War I was to be found in her production of the tools of war.

The response of Connecticut industries to these demands were reflected immediately in the expansion of factories. The amount spent for new mills in the two years ending July 1, 1914, was \$6,288,230 as compared to approximately five and one quarter million for the two years previous to July 1, 1914.²⁰ During the next two years, 1914-16, the amount spent, including repairs and additions amounted to more than 18 million dollars. Even though the Federal government curtailed building operations after the United States entered the war, Connecticut industries, since they were engaged almost entirely in the war effort, were able to secure permission to expand the facilities of 386 manufacturers at a total cost of almost 14 million dollars. That much of this was

temporary and designed primarily, if not solely, for war production is suggested by the fact that, during the two years immediately after the war, the number of industries which expanded their facilities was only half that of the previous two years, yet the value of the buildings was almost ten million dollars in excess of the value of the total number of buildings constructed during the period 1916-18.²¹ Connecticut was experiencing the most prosperous era of her history and there was hope that the prosperity would be permanent.²²

The established munitions industries provided the base for this wartime expansion. Colt, Remington, Winchester, and Marlin were national brand names when World War I came and had for years contributed to the perfection and development of firearms. Du Pont de Nemours, which had a branch in Middletown, occupied a similar position in the field of explosives. These companies anticipated the war and when the orders of allied governments began to flow into the state, bold action was substituted for the caution which had characterized their expansion. The Winchester Arms Company, for example, doubled its capacity. The stimulus of patriotism was added to that of profit when the United States entered the war. To these and dozens of lesser-known arms and munitions makers were added those who moved to Connecticut from other states, such as the David Warner Arms Corporation which moved from Massachusetts to Middletown in 1917.²³

Other companies rapidly converted to the production of the materials of war. Wartime contracts made peacetime machinery obsolescent and surplus goods were put up for auction. Time and motion experts were in demand.²⁴ The American Brass Company produced cartridge brass, discs for shell cases and countless other items in the aggregate of one billion pounds. The Scoville Manufacturing Company, which devoted practically its entire plant to munitions after the United States entered the war, produced time and combination fuses, artillery shell cases, and cups for cartridge shells. In a similar manner the hardware industry turned its attention to the fulfillment of government contracts. American Hardware, for example, devoted 75 percent of its production to the fabrication of marine hardware, hand grenades, French mortars, magazines for Browning rifles, and locks for cantonments, arsenals, and new government buildings. Manufacturers not

only expanded their facilities, but also introduced new techniques and procedures, added new divisions, and revamped the management and organization of their factories to meet the new demands.²⁵

Technical advances in the metal working field added materially to the volume of the production of munitions. The New Britain Machine Company, which had been organized in 1895, had brought under its management, in the years before the war, companies skilled in the operation of the automatic screw machine. Also, Christopher M. Spencer, one of the pioneers in the design of the automatic screw machine, became an associate, and through his efforts and those of R. S. Brown, another of the pioneers in the field, the multiple spindle automatic machine was further improved. The Company, then, was well equipped to produce during the war the gun carriage for the 75 millimeter and anti-aircraft guns and the tripods for the machine guns.²⁶

The closing of European sources of supply resulted in new opportunities for some Connecticut manufacturers. Until 1914, 80 per cent of the ball bearings used in this country were imported from Europe, principally from Germany. Until the war the Fafnir Bearing Company, which had been organized in 1911 and had pioneered in the production of ball bearings in this state, had secured all of its steel from Germany and all of its balls from England. With the outbreak of the war the Company developed an American source of supply of a suitable alloy and designed the tools and machines necessary for producing a product independently of European tools or materials. A similar situation prevailed in the supply of metal thread. With the German market cutoff and the French companies absorbed in meeting their own needs, the J. R. Montgomery Company of Windsor Locks produced the great bulk of the metal thread needed by the allied armies for communication purposes.²⁷

The traditions and experience of the state were sustained in the construction of naval craft as well as in arms manufacture. Simon Lake of Milford had designed in the last decade of the 19th century a torpedo boat which was endorsed by the Naval Construction Board. The Lake Torpedo Boat Company was established in New Jersey in 1901. The United States House of Representatives failed at that time to appropriate funds for the purchase of Lake's craft, but foreign governments were

more interested. Contracts were received from both Russia and Austria. The first contract with the United States government was entered into in 1908 and by 1914 three torpedo boats had been completed under it. The last of these was the first vessel to be built at a Bridgeport plant of the Company. In anticipation of war demands, the plant in Bridgeport was expanded from three and one-half acres to 29. By July, 1917, the Company had built 12 more boats for the government. It has been described as the only shipbuilding plant in the world exclusively devoted to the construction of submarines.²⁸

There is, perhaps, no exact measure of the extent to which Connecticut became the "arsenal for democracy." Much of the work was done by sub-contracting. The Birmingham Iron Foundry of Derby, although it did not seek government contracts, made its facilities available for war production when needed and was used primarily by the Watertown Arsenal. More important, perhaps, were the small shops without name or recorder, who performed untold secondary operations and added materially to the productive capacity of the large industries. The Connecticut Department of Labor estimated that in addition to the goods produced for the allies, the state produced over 45 percent of all the munitions used in the late war by the United States and 70 percent of the other war essentials.²⁹

The high wages and shorter hours of industry attracted many who had been engaged in other pursuits and resulted in a labor shortage in other areas. Farmers from New England and afar flocked to the munitions industries. The short supply of agricultural labor was felt particularly in the harvesting of tobacco. To alleviate the shortage negroes were imported from the South, but the expedient was found to be unsatisfactory. Partially, perhaps, this may have been due to the unfamiliar surroundings, and partially because the negroes, too, were attracted by the higher wages in factories. To an increasing extent, children were employed in the harvesting of tobacco. There was a similar shortage of domestic servants, and stores, particularly in the Bridgeport area, suffered an exodus of employees.³⁰ The mobility of the labor force is suggested by the increase in the number of positions filled by the State Employment Bureaus from 16,000 in 1913-14 to 37,000 in 1915-16.³¹

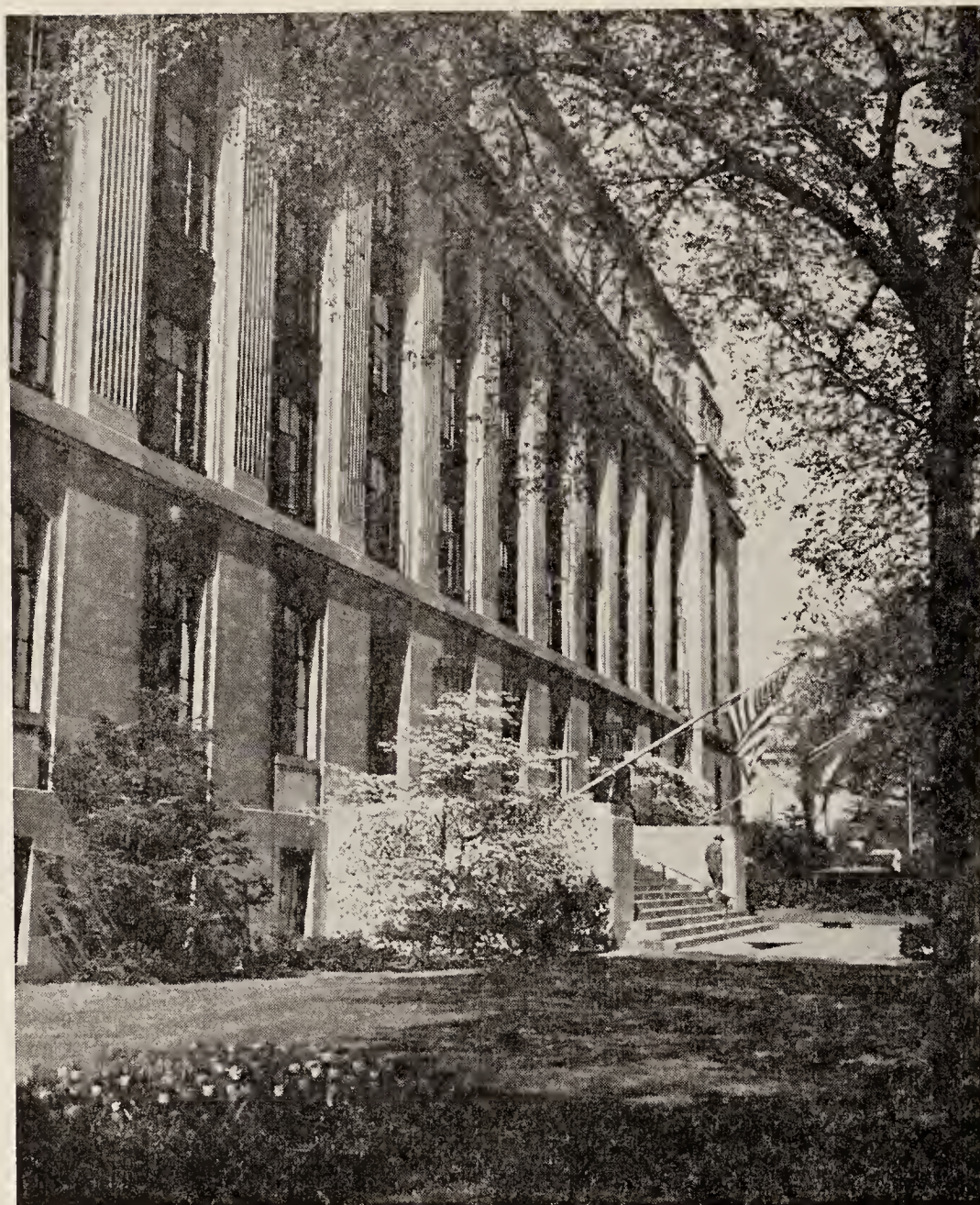
The industrial labor force was further supplemented by a noticeable increase in the number of women and children employed. Before 1910, the female laborer was found principally in the textile mills, but after 1914 women became proficient in the metal trade operations of priming, drilling, milling, and bending tubes. Women of 50, girls in their teens—all came to work. The number of women engaged in gainful employment doubled during the war, increasing from 43,380 in 1913 to 67,002 in 1914, and by an additional 20,000 by the last year of the war. When the second draft came, it appeared that women would have to be used to an even greater extent and employers flooded the labor department with inquiries as to the limits under which women could be employed. Night employment of women jumped until the practice became the subject of investigation in Bridgeport by the Russell Sage Foundation. It was disclosed that employers were taking advantage of a law which fixed the closingtime for women employees at 10:00 P.M., but which established no opening hour, so that frequently a new shift started to work at 12:00 A.M. The flood of protests against this night employment went unheeded as the demands for war goods continued. Also, more children between the ages of 14 and 16 were employed than ever before and at wages which previously would have been considered suitable for adults. The Federal Government's attempt to curb child labor generally failed of its purpose as the Federal Child Labor Act prohibiting the employment of children under 16 for more than eight hours a day or 48 hours a week was declared unconstitutional.³²

Although the weekly pay increased, it hardly kept pace with the advancing prices and resulted in little if any real improvement in the economic lot of the wage earner and in even less for salaried personnel. The rise in the cost of living during the war was estimated to average from 55 to 60 percent. Clothing advanced from 75 to 100 percent, rent from 15 to 45 percent, fuel from 20 to 45 percent and foodstuffs almost a uniform 60 percent. Bargain prices for pork roast in January, 1919, were listed as 32 cents; potatoes, from 45 to 50 cents a peck; eggs, 85 to 90 cents a dozen; coffee, 32 to 38 cents a pound; and oranges, from 50 to 90 cents a dozen. In certain of the cities price increases were especially high. In contrast, although the wages in particular localities and

occupations varied, the average rise was estimated to be about 41 percent. The Bureau of Labor reported that the middle classes suffered most. Although some salaries increased as much as 35 percent, it was estimated that the average increase in salary since 1916 was only about 20 percent.³³

The failure of wages to keep pace with the advancing prices coupled with the shortage of labor caused wage earners to resort to strikes in an effort to improve their position. The greatest number of strikes in the state's history occurred in the years 1915-16. There were 422 strikes affecting approximately 68,000 persons. Women were involved in the strikes for the first time. There was a noticeable decrease in the number of strikes in the next two years, there being 183 strikes affecting 33,400 employees. In the years 1918 to 1920, "notwithstanding the high wages and the constant demand for workers," the Labor Bureau reported an increase to 280 strikes involving 75,943 employees. Whether the low figure for the years 1916-17 can be attributed to the entry of the United States into the War is conjectural but there was strong public opinion against those who struck for higher wages while other citizens were actively engaged in the war. In any event the strikers were not notably successful in achieving their objectives. Of the 183 strikes in the years 1917-18, the demands of the strikers were met in 31 cases, compromised in 43, and were unsuccessful in 109. In the years 1918-19, the strikers were successful only in 19 cases, achieved a compromise in 81, and were unsuccessful in 181. Wage earners, then, were completely unsuccessful in more than 62 percent of their strikes in the period from 1917 to 1920.³⁴

Serious housing conditions coincided with the rush of laborers to the cities. Strangers from the western states, on occasion, were forced to enlist the support of the police to secure housing for one night. Long time residents of tenements were forced to vacate their homes by landlords who doubled and tripled the rent. Dilapidated houses without central heat or plumbing were renting from \$125 a month. So serious was the housing, however, that even those who rented these made money by crowding as many as 45 lodgers in a single house at \$1.25 a week. The increase in rents was attributed to the increase in the cost of living and to the government's restriction on new construction.³⁵



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

HARTFORD—STATE OFFICE BUILDING

The shortage was alleviated somewhat by the living quarters provided by a number of the munitions plants. In Bridgeport, the Remington Union Metallic Company invested two million dollars in 1915 in houses for its employees and built dormitories in Bridgeport and in Stamford for women. The Scoville Manufacturing Company in Waterbury purchased a tract of land on which it erected six frame dwellings, sold them to its workers for \$3,000, and a number of brick dwellings sold for \$4,000. The houses were paid for at the rate of \$30.00 per

month. Similar methods were followed by the Cheney Brothers in Manchester and by the New Departure Company in Bristol.³⁶

Connecticut residents followed the war in Europe day by day on maps outlining the thrust and counter-thrust of the enemies and the allies. Connecticut troops were in the thick of the effort at Seicheprey to stem the German advance in the Spring of 1917 and helped counter the final desperate attempt of the Germans at the Aisne-Marne in July. As the offensive was seized by the Allies, Connecticut troops were among those who launched the bombardment which leveled Saint Mihiel on September 12, and were engaged in a skirmish at Marcheville on September 26. The troops took up a position north of Verdun on October 19 as the Meuse-Argonne battle developed and resulted in the annihilation of the Germans and in the Armistice on November 11.³⁷

Although some 40 officers, including Colonel James H. Waterman of Hartford, were detached from the Yankee Division for service with the Army of Occupation, the Connecticut troops were encamped in a rest area in France until they would be returned home. Camp routine was broken by the visit of President Wilson on Christmas Day and by the pinning of the *Croix de Guerre* on the colors of the 102nd for its heroics at Marcheville in January, and by a review for Pershing on February 19. The trip home was uneventful. The troops docked at Boston in the latter part of April and were discharged at Camp Devens, Massachusetts, between April 28 and 30, 1919. Enthusiastic citizens cheered the return of their heroes along the route from Camp Devens to Hartford where the regimental and battalion colors were deposited in the Battle Flag Corridor in the Capitol.³⁸

The real cost of the war was measured in the number of casualties suffered by Connecticut members of the expeditionary force. A total of 53 officers and 1,236 enlisted men had given their lives in the war to preserve democracy. Of this total, 677 men were killed in action, an additional 258 died of wounds received in battle, and 301 died from disease and other causes. It is striking that approximately half of those who lost their lives were from the National Guard. This may be explained by the fact that these were the first troops in the field and by the comparatively short period of the country's active participation in the war. Of similar interest is the fact that only 100 of those who died

from disease were from the National Guard troops. The decimation of the population at home by a plague was more extreme.³⁹

An epidemic of influenza swept over the State in the fall of 1918 and endangered the whole of the population. Three hundred thousand of the state's one and one quarter million people suffered from the disease. In all, 6,000 people died, with the death rate reaching 7.5 per thousand in Waterbury where the toll was highest. In Waterbury, to supplement regular facilities, two temporary hospitals were established and the Scoville Manufacturing Company and the Waterbury Country Club extended their facilities. The work of the manufacturing establishments all but stopped; one corporation had 300 absent because of the illness. It was charged that the number of deaths was caused by carelessness and underestimation of the seriousness of the disease. In some towns, Boards of Health performed notable service while others were poorly organized and ineffective. It was more difficult to combat the epidemic because it struck while many doctors and nurses were out of the state because of the war.⁴⁰ War conditions which posed a direct threat to life at home and abroad ended, but readjustments in Connecticut's way of life became an immediate necessity.

The Armistice brought the cancellation of war contracts and a brief post-war industrial slump. It was reported that in Connecticut the Federal government cancelled contracts totaling \$55,000,000. In addition to the slackening of demand, an inadequate transportation, a limited credit, and a scarcity of available raw materials were believed to have been contributory to the dullness. The industrial centers of New Haven, Norwich, Bristol, New London, New Britain, and Bridgeport were hardest hit. The decrease in production was greatest in the silk, woolen, cotton, and rubber industries.⁴¹

Despite the conviction that the depression was genuine, industry was going through a period of reconversion and the condition was less serious than feared.⁴² The American Brass Company, for example, went into the automotive, electrical, and appliance industries; the New Britain Machine Company developed a complete line of pressed steel shop furniture; and the Winchester Company introduced a line of hardware and sporting novelties.⁴³ While this reconversion laid a basis for sound industrial expansion in the future, the large amount of capital

necessary for the introduction of the new lines drained necessary operating funds.⁴⁴ The basic strength of the economy was suggested by the nine million dollar increase in the value of industrial expansion, although the number of industrial structures decreased by 199 in the two years after the war.⁴⁵ Also, an increase in individual savings deposits portended well for the ultimate capital outlook. Over seven million dollars were deposited from Armistice Day to January, 1919. In the city of Bridgeport alone, these deposits were \$1,222,000 in the month of December, 1919.⁴⁶

In the immediate situation, however, unemployment increased, wages fell, and the cost of living reached a new high all over the state. Milk had risen from eight cents a quart in 1915 to 18 cents in 1920. For other items the increase was close to 200 percent, and the average increase was estimated to be more than 100 percent. The most notable increases were for wood, coal, food, and clothing. Profiteering reached its highest point in 1920, and buyers' strikes failed to halt the spiraling prices. The situation was aggravated in Connecticut by the fact that prices within the state did not decrease as quickly as those in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.⁴⁷ It was estimated that by the end of 1920 approximately 14 percent of the work force of the state was idle. Many industries were on a part-time basis, some on a four-day week. Not only had war production stopped, but immigration had been resumed and swelled the labor supply. In the two years immediately after the war there were 280 strikes in the state, which resulted in a loss of 1,307,508 employee days.⁴⁸ Wages were maintained at no higher rate than procurement of laborers made necessary. Subsequently, a labor leader representing textile workers pointed out that the financial statements published by a number of firms had reported increased cash and stock dividends in 1921, "the year when textile workers were forced to take a 22½% wage cut." It was noted that if these earnings had been passed on to the workers an increase in wages would have resulted.⁴⁹

Reformers believed it was morally wrong for the situation to continue unchanged, and, since the manufacturers would not act, state action was proposed. Further, it was argued and widely feared that if the government did not act, the workers might take matters in their own hands. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 had focused attention on the

aliens in Connecticut and the recruitment of soldiers had emphasized the numbers of unassimilated aliens in the Connecticut population. The unsettled labor conditions were related to the fear of Communism which spread over the state at the conclusion of World War I. During the Red Scare in 1919, R. P. Butler of the Consumers League warned that industrial and social legislation must "balance" economic pressures upon the individual if force and bloodshed were to be avoided.⁵⁰ Willard B. Rogers, a Republican representative from Manchester, a center of silk manufacturing, shared this conviction. Rogers had attended the White House Conference called by the Secretary of Labor to discuss post-war problems and had returned believing that revolution would be entrained by a failure to pass the legislation desired by the workers.⁵¹ Charlotte Holloway, the Industrial Investigator employed by the State Bureau of Labor, vigorously denounced the contention of Attorney General Palmer that the Reds were responsible for all of the strikes, but agreed that there was a basis for the belief that an extremely radical element had entered the state and had increased the difficulty of reaching an amicable agreement in labor disputes. The Assembly was sufficiently concerned in 1919 to appoint a committee to investigate and to report in six weeks. Willard Rogers and his committee found the condition of labor "not seriously abnormal" in the number out of employment, but saw a menace in the mental attitude which had developed "due to the experiences of the past year and the influence of IWW and the Bolshevik propaganda."⁵²

To meet the situation, schools for the masses were urged by some who contended that radical agitators would have less success if an intelligent understanding of the history and purposes of the United States were transmitted to the citizenry.⁵³ Others pressed for attention to the state's health and underscored the excessive mortality among children by pointing out that 4,878 children under five died in Connecticut each year.⁵⁴

NOTES—CHAPTER XXX

¹ Jackson, *Baldwin*, p. 197; Public Documents, 1914, Vol. I, Pt. 1, Inaugural Address of Marcus H. Holcombe, (Hartford, 1915), pp. 3-16.

² *Ibid.*, 1918, Vol. I, Pt. 2, Report of the Bureau of Labor (Hartford, 1918), p. 29; Osterweis, *New Haven*, pp. 401-402.

³ Public Documents, 1918, Vol. I, Pt. 2, Report of the Bureau of Labor, (Hartford, 1918), p. 29.

- ⁴ Public Documents, 1916, Vol. I, Pt. 2, Report of the Bureau of Labor on the Conditions of Wage Earning Women and Girls, (Hartford, 1916), p. 23.
- ⁵ Public Documents, 1914, Vol. I, Pt. 2, Report of Bureau of Labor Statistics, (Hartford, 1914), p. 9.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, Pt. 1, Report of the Department of Labor on the Conditions of Wage Earners in the State, (Hartford, 1918), p. 15.
- ⁷ Osterweis, *New Haven*, pp. 401-403; *The Review of Reviews*, Vol. 57, Jan.-June, 1918, p. 520.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. 55, Jan.-June, 1917, pp. 533-35; *Scientific American*, Vol. 116, March 17, 1917, p. 280; Public Documents, 1918, Vol. I, Pt. 1, p. 3.
- ⁹ *Review of Reviews*, Vol. 55, Jan.-June 1917, pp. 533-535.
- ¹⁰ *Scientific American*, Vol. 116, March 17, 1917, p. 293.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 280.
- ¹² Charles W. Burpee, *The Story of Connecticut*, 4 vols. (New York, 1939), Vol. II, pp. 952-60; Public Documents, 1918, Vol. I, Pt. 1, pp. 4-5.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 1920, Vol. III, Pt. 1, (Hartford, 1920), Report of the Adjutant General for the Two Years ending June 20, 1920, pp. 21-42; Osterweis, *New Haven*, pp. 403-404; Charles W. Burpee, "Connecticut in the Wars," in Osborn, *History of Connecticut*, Vol. V, pp. 129-31.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 132-35.
- ¹⁵ Public Documents, 1917, Vol. I, Pt. 1, p. 8; *Ibid.*, 1918, Vol. III, Pt. 1, p. 67; Osterweis, *New Haven*, pp. 493-94.
- ¹⁶ Burpee, *Story of Connecticut*, Vol. II, pp. 966-67; *Review of Reviews*, Vol. 57, Jan.-June, 1918, p. 520.
- ¹⁷ Pliny Leroy Harwood, "Savings Banks," in Osborn, *History of Connecticut*, Vol. V, p. 375; *Review of Reviews*, Vol. 57, Jan.-June, 1918, p. 521.
- ¹⁸ Osborn, *History of Connecticut*, Vol. V, p. 122; Burpee, *Story of Connecticut*, Vol. II, p. 959.
- ¹⁹ *Review of Reviews*, Vol. 57, Jan.-June, 1918, p. 521; Burpee, *Story of Connecticut*, Vol. II, p. 967; Public Documents, 1918, Vol. I, Pt. 1, pp. 6-7.
- ²⁰ Public Documents, 1914, Vol. I, Pt. 2, Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, (Hartford, 1914), p. 9.
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- ²³ George B. Chandler, "Industrial History," in Osborn, *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, pp. 182-202.
- ²⁴ *Hartford Courant*, December 5-11, 1914; May 4-12, 1915.
- ²⁵ Chandler, "Industrial History," in Osborn, *History of Connecticut*, Vol. IV, pp. 73, 106.
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- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 120-21, 277.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 199-201.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 106, pp. 374-75.
- ³⁰ Public Documents, 1918, Vol. III, Pt. 2, Report of the Bureau of Labor, (Hartford, 1918), pp. 29-30; Public Documents, 1918, Vol. III, Pt. 1, Report of the Department of Labor on the Condition of the Wage Earner in the State (Hartford, 1918), p. 8.
- ³¹ *Hartford Times*, Feb. 14, 1916.
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- ⁴⁹ Rowland L. Mitchell, Jr., "Social Legislation in Connecticut, 1919-1939, A Case Study in the Relations between Business, Labor, Politics, Federalism, and Reform," (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Yale University, 1954), p. 197.
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Chapter XXXI

The Business Man's Community

THE NINETEEN TWENTIES belonged to the business men. Industrial expansion was accompanied by great technical advances and the growth of corporate control. The opiates of the era blurred from vision the seriousness of Southern competition in attracting industry and the portents of weakness in the transportation system which was decaying in the midst of an expanding economy. The methods of Connecticut business were object lessons for the Connecticut farmer, who introduced business practices in the marketing of his products. Not even the industrial workers rippled the apparently tranquil sea of prosperity. The increasing numbers of laborers were lulled into apathy, in part by the comparative comforts of urban living made possible by paternalistic practices, the introduction of new consumer goods, and a novel credit plan. By these innovations, an insistent demand for an increase in real wages was postponed. The appeal of labor organization was too limited for organized labor to bargain with the new power of wealth and industry. Moreover, a large number of the laborers were drawn from immigrant groups which had not been enfranchised, and therefore, Connecticut labor could not exert an effective political influence. In the nineteen twenties, political leadership was held by those who were oriented to the needs of the business community.

Business in Government

That the Republican Party was an effective instrument for the continuance of business-controlled government is revealed by the election during the decade of five Republican Governors, all the state ex-

ecutive officers, six Republicans to one Democrat in the State Senate, and four to one in the House. To preserve and to extend the advantages, such as tariff, which a favorably disposed central government could provide, all of the Senators and all but one of the Congressmen which Connecticut sent to Washington were Republican. Not only were the elected officials Republican, but those in control of the party represented its most conservative wing. Progressivism had waned with the war and liberal influences were beaten down amidst the Red scare and intra-party strife which left J. Henry Roraback in complete control of the conservative forces.¹

J. Henry, as Roraback was popularly known, after graduating from high school, moved with his parents from his native Massachusetts to North Canaan, from where he launched a political career which was to bring him national prestige, the unchallenged leadership of the Republican Party, and a position of greatest influence in Connecticut politics. In 1903, Roraback resigned as a member of the Republican State Central Committee to become a lobbyist for the New Haven Railroad. The association was of benefit to J. Henry financially and politically. The association was terminated formally in 1910 before the more notorious facts of the condition of the New Haven became public. Two years later Roraback became Chairman of the Republican State Central Committee, by the twenties was a member of the national committee, and by 1924 was the uncrowned ruler of Connecticut politics.²

From the relative seclusion of the Allyn House, Roraback wielded his powers within the time-proved formula for political success. Through legislation of special benefit to rural areas, such as appropriations for agricultural services and grants for education, he furthered the political partnership of the rural areas and the business community. This coalition although eventually inadequate was to assure Republican success throughout the decade. By skillful exercise of patronage and of a severe party discipline, he kept the dissidents in line. When the Democrats in the more urban centers became too strong, an abominable "ripper bill" designed to strip local officials of some of their power over local government would be pushed through the Assembly. By skillfully scattering the crumbs of patronage, he cut at the roots of the opposition. The fraternal co-existence extended to Homer Cummings,



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HARTFORD—SKYLINE VIEW

the Democratic National Chairman, lent credence to the charge that the Democratic Party was but an annex of the Republican Party.³

Roraback's power as a leader of a business-oriented political party was enhanced by his own success in business. He began his career in electric power in 1905 with the purchase of the Berkshire Power Company. Once the company was solvent, he sold it to the Hartford Electric Power Company. In the same year he secured a charter incorporating the Rocky River Power Company "to build and operate dams and

produce hydro-electric power on the Rocky River, a tributary to the Housatonic." Because of the lack of capital, the right was never exercised. However, when in 1917 the New Haven Railroad was forced to sell the Housatonic Power Company, which owned the Milford Power Company and a steam plant in Waterbury, Roraback, using capital provided in large part by the United Gas and Electric, a public utilities holding company in Philadelphia, merged his company with the Housatonic under the name of the Connecticut Light and Power Company. Under the Presidency of Roraback, the company benefited enormously. In 1923, the General Assembly authorized the diversion of the waters of the Housatonic over the Rocky River for hydro-electric power. The company in 1927 was granted the power of eminent domain for obtaining right of ways to build pipe lines to transport the gas manufactured by the company and to sell gas in all territories of the state which were not allocated to some other company. There was little else the State could do for Connecticut Light and Power. The benefits were illustrative of the benefits to be derived from a government in which the political leadership was oriented to business.⁴

The Governors of the state during the decade, with one exception, were all business men. Edward J. Lake (1921-23) was owner of a lumber company in Hartford; Charles A. Templeton (1923-25) was a hardware merchant in Waterbury; and John H. Trumbull (1925-31) was President of the Trumbull Electric Company, Director of Connecticut Light and Power, and became Director of a number of other corporations during his term as Governor. The exception was Hiram Bingham, a Yale history Professor, who became Governor for a day. Following his election as Governor in 1924, a vacancy in the Senate occurred as a result of the suicide of Frank B. Brandegee. In the special election in November, Bingham ran for and was elected to the vacant seat. He chose, however, to be sworn in as Governor before assuming the position as junior Senator from Connecticut. Of these, Lake was at such variance with Roraback that at a Republican rally in 1922, the Governor could gain admittance only to the balcony. Templeton refused the advice of the party chairman on several occasions and broke with Roraback before his term was concluded so that he was denied re-nomination.⁵

John H. Trumbull, a strong Roraback man, epitomized business in government. The purpose of government under his aegis was to create, through a favorable tax structure and other benefits, a climate in which business would flourish. He believed that his most important function as Governor was to serve "as a presiding director of a large and complex organization." He applied business principles in the operation of state affairs and enunciated again and again the desirability of establishing a surplus in the treasury and adhering to a "pay as you go" policy in state expenditure. This harmonized with Connecticut tradition and with the spirit of the twenties. John H. Trumbull was Connecticut's guardian of the "era of prosperity."⁶

The chief executives enunciated programs which were generally in accord with conservative ideas. Economy was the watch-word and a pay-as-you-go attitude was adopted toward state expenditures. The deficits resulting from the war years were paid off by 1923, and, for the remainder of the decade, surpluses mounted in the treasury. The programs were kept well within the state's ability to pay. The recommendations of the Governors for expenditures for charitable institutions could not have had the ring of urgency and resulted in appropriations which bore little relation to the pressing needs. Vocational training programs for the feeble minded had to be defended upon economic grounds. The long-range benefits of low taxes to the state and to business interests were repeatedly emphasized. The Governors consistently called for the adoption of business procedures in government, including the reorganization of departments and improvement of auditing procedures.⁷

Finally, amidst uncertainties as to the wisdom of such a centralized agency, Governor Trumbull pushed through the Assembly legislation authorizing the creation of a Department of Finance and Control, to take over and to expand the duties of the former Board of Finance and Board of Control. Only when economic practices threatened the welfare of Connecticut citizens, as in the case of the coal shortages of 1923, would a Governor consider intruding upon the practice of private enterprise. Connecticut, as Governor Templeton remarked, certainly showed "no traces of socialistic desires." He recommended that the state "ought not to engage in any form of merchandising where the service can be satisfactorily performed by private enterprise," but he was

quick to point out that the needs of society were becoming more complex and Connecticut would not allow its citizens to freeze "either as a result of unfortunate mining conditions or rapacity."⁸

To insure steady habits in public affairs there were the formal organizations of business men and manufacturers. There was no question as to the objectives of any of these organizations. The Manufacturers' Association stated frankly in 1926 that "the function of government, whether local, state, or national, consists, first of all, in the promotion of the legitimate business enterprises carried on within its borders." In 1923, the President of the State Chamber of Commerce stated to its members that the most important of its services was its "work in connection with the State Legislature and the administration of the State's affairs. . . ."⁹ That both groups were extraordinarily successful in their effort is shown by their reports to their members. In 1923, for example, the Assembly acted favorably on 19 of the 23 bills supported by the Chamber of Commerce,¹⁰ and in 1925 the Manufacturers' Association reported that no legislation inimical to its interest had been enacted.¹¹ There is no question but that they and other organizations, such as that of the retail merchants, were sincere in their belief that they were operating not only for their own benefit but also in the interest of the citizens of the state. These were not the only interest groups in the state, but they were far more effective than any of the others. Although there were complaints against too much government, and assertions that the government had done little, the policies followed by the state government were of distinct advantage to Connecticut business.¹²

Of great importance was a favorable tax structure. Historically, taxes in the state had been levied on the basis of property. Corporations under such an arrangement paid taxes on the value of their stock. The tax structure was changed significantly in 1915 as a result of a commission appointed in 1911. Thereafter, taxes on corporations were to be based upon a company's net income.¹³ The immediate effect was that corporations produced three and one quarter millions in taxes and were the greatest revenue producer in the state. This was still true in 1921; although the gross receipts from this tax amounted to only about three million dollars, this still represented 20 percent of the total taxes

received by the state. It was true, also, that under the law corporations were able to avoid reflecting increased real earnings and were able, in fact, even to reduce the amounts paid under this tax. In the twenties, although these were years of unparalleled expansion, the gross receipts from the corporation tax had shrunk to about two and one-half million, or 10 percent of the total taxes received in 1927. By the end of the decade, corporation taxes represented less than eight percent of total taxes.¹⁴ The methods by which corporations took advantage of the tax law were revealed in a report of the Tax Commission in 1934. The companies did not have to declare as net income funds used for salaries and there was a material increase in the amounts of returns distributed in this guise. Declarations of assets as net income was further avoided, basing expansion on the issuance of bonds rather than of stocks. So long as a company paid no appreciable dividends to stockholders, it was not legally bound to pay taxes to the state. Under such arrangements, some of the largest corporations in the state were paying the minimum tax of \$10.00.¹⁵ The increased cost of government during the twenties was borne by increases in gasoline and motor vehicle license fees. By 1930, these contributed more than 30 percent of the total receipts of over 38 million. There was little wonder that business did not object to the tax structure.¹⁶

A New Era of Industrial Expansion

In this favorable climate, Connecticut moved into a new era of industrial expansion. The state's industries bounced back from the post-war depression and the Industrial Investigator reported enthusiastically that the industrial production for the first half of 1923 surpassed all records. Even the bootlegging industry was credited with being more reliable and asking more reasonable prices than those of other states.¹⁷ The most important contributor to the state's economic well-being was the motor car industry. Although Connecticut had ceased to be the center of motor car production, thousands of industries, such as the iron, steel, light metals, hardware, electricity, and textiles depended upon it directly and indirectly for their business.¹⁸ While the old line businesses, such as hardware, made adjustments to meet the demands of the consumer's market, new possibilities for future industrial growth

were provided by the introduction of the radio and the location of aircraft industries at Naugatuck, and Hartford. It was asserted, and it proved correct, that Pratt and Whitney would make Connecticut's name known throughout the world.¹⁹ The gross value of manufactured products in the last eight years of the nineteen twenties averaged \$1,300,000,000. The high of \$1,471,000,000 in 1929 represented nearly a 300 percent increase over the prewar years.²⁰

The crest of the optimism of the twenties, if measured by physical expansion, was reached in 1924 when facilities valued at more than 16 million dollars were added to industrial plants. Connecticut Light and Power led the way by completing a structure in Milford valued at four million dollars. Industrial leaders remained cautious and conservative, however. Amidst the uncertainties of the last years of the decade, new construction fell off perceptibly. The total for any two of the last six years hardly exceeded four million dollars and more than half of this was provided by three companies, Pratt and Whitney and Chance Vought of Hartford and New Departure of Bristol. The expansion of facilities, however, was only one method by which industry developed to meet the demands of the twenties.²¹

Connecticut met the demands for production in part through various technical advances. The greater use of machine tools, the extension of mass production methods, and the increased motive power speeded up all types of production. A measure of the technological change in Connecticut industry is revealed in the changeover from steam to electric power. As late as 1919, 42 percent of the power utilized in the state was furnished by steam, and 48 percent by electricity. By 1929, however, electricity furnished 70 percent of the power; and steam, 28. Water, which furnished only nine percent of the power in 1919, had all but vanished as a source of power by the end of the decade. It was estimated in 1928 that in a factory with modern machinery ten, or even five, persons were doing the work done by one hundred employees five years previously. Mass production, technological changes, and the need for increased capital were reflected in the structure and management of business.²²

Corporate control and consolidation came to characterize Connecticut business. Neither the number of corporations nor the per-

centage of gross product produced by them increased significantly above the 93.8 percent of 1919, but the number of partnerships and individually owned establishments decreased from 3,008 in 1919 to 1,283 in 1929. Furthermore, the United States Census had to extend its classification of "big manufacturers" from those which produced over one million to those which produced over two and one-half millions and five millions worth of goods. Big industries in Connecticut in 1929 produced 75 percent of the total product of \$1,471,875,604. Those with a gross of over five million produced more than half of this, or almost 40 percent of the total.²³

In addition to the obvious tendency for big industries to grow bigger, the public utilities of the state went through a series of mergers and consolidations. The jitney and gas companies followed the leadership of J. Henry Roraback and his Connecticut Light and Power Company and brought a number of companies under single management. It was held that such organizations brought better service to the state's citizens and were better able to withstand economic fluctuations.²⁴ There were disadvantages to such consolidations, however. Individual corporations may have been able to effect savings through consolidations, especially during periods of retrenchment, but may have thus contributed to unsettled labor conditions. Although there was little danger in the twenties that action would be taken, management, by its continued expansion, made itself liable to prosecution under the anti-trust law. More important, consolidation invited absentee ownership and the loss of local control.

Of more immediate concern were the inroads challenging the state's industrial position. Partially with the aid of English capital, the South began to attract certain of the state's cotton firms in the twenties. For a number of years, the larger mills had operated on a small margin of profit. The number of mills in the state dropped from 47 in 1919 to 33 in 1929, and the value of their gross products dropped from 101 to 40 million. While hope lingered that the skilled workmen of Connecticut would offset the advantages of cheap labor in the South and that "the real New England" would reassert itself to offset the natural advantages inherent in southern locations, the realist knew that the industry in the state had for too long clung to obsolete methods of

production.²⁵ Although the greatest exodus was that of the cotton firms, other industries were moving also. There was genuine fear expressed by the President of the Connecticut Chamber of Commerce in 1924, who stated, somewhat prophetically, that in the next 20 years Connecticut would be faced with a fight to maintain her industrial supremacy. Understandably, with the industrialization of other regions, the state would produce a smaller share of the gross value of the nation's manufactured products. At the end of the century, Connecticut was producing 2.42 percent of the total; in 1919, 2.19 percent; and in 1929, only 2.09 percent. While her relative position within the nation thus deteriorated, her position in relation to the other New England states improved. Connecticut was the only one of the New England states whose gross manufactured product was of greater value in 1929 than in 1919.²⁶

The industrial profile of the state reveals the basis for this position. Connecticut was rapidly becoming a center of the light metals industry. The gross of 234 million represented almost 16 percent of the total value of all manufactured products. Machine shop products were a distant second, with a total value of 106 million; and electrical machinery third, with 87 million. Hardware led the established industries with a total of 71 million, followed by silk and rayon at 54 million and hat and cap industries at 50 million. The great diversity of the state's industries is revealed in the more than 115 different types of endeavor. Eighteen different companies showed a gross value of product in excess of 10 million dollars.²⁷

A Basis for a Highway System

The potential of industrial growth was somewhat limited by an inadequate highway system. The trunk line system begun in 1913 was still far from complete at the conclusion of the war. The greatest change, in fact, was the change in designation from state aid roads. The 666 miles of federal roads were entirely inadequate. Practically all of the 12 to 14 hundred miles of trunk lines were low grade black top, over half were classified as "old roads," and over half of these were in need of being reconstructed. The old roads had been widened and strengthened to increase their serviceability during the war, but construction and maintenance had suffered enormously for lack of sufficient funds. From

1913, when the state began to assume active responsibility for road construction and maintenance, until 1920, Connecticut spent an average of less than one and one-half million dollars each year for road construction and approximately another million for maintenance. The roads and highways of the state did not meet the needs of the increased motor traffic of the twenties.²⁸

As the number of motor vehicles increased, highway traffic reached a hitherto unbelievable figure. The total number of motor vehicles registered in the state almost tripled from 1915 to 1920, increasing from 41,121 in 1915 to 119,134 in 1920. One in every 11 persons owned a motor vehicle in 1920 as compared to the one in 30 percentage which prevailed in 1915. No statistics are available for traffic in the first years of highway development, but it was estimated that approximately 690,000,000 vehicle miles rolled over Connecticut roads. It was estimated further that by 1922-23 approximately 60 percent of this was on the state highway system. Because of its location, Connecticut had to provide for a large amount of traffic from adjacent areas. The nineteen twenties saw the advent of the motor car, and the problems of providing an adequate highway system were accentuated not only by the numbers of vehicles which were quickly in use, but also by the numerous types of vehicles.²⁹

More than anything else, it was the rise of the motor transport industry which made previous methods of highway construction and financing obsolete. Intercity trucking necessitated by the rail congestion of the war years was the real beginning of the industry. The number of trucks in Connecticut had increased from 7,247 to 24,011, or almost three and one-half times from 1915 to 1920. More than 600 of these were over four tons in weight. To these was added the interstate bus which became of importance about 1925. It was estimated that the cost of highway construction was almost doubled by the necessity to provide roadways for these heavier vehicles. There was a tendency for trucks to carry loads heavier than their rated capacity. Over 30 percent of all trucks were found to be overloaded, with the larger trucks overloaded about six percent. Some of the problems resulted from the truck manufacturers underrating the capacity of the trucks. Although no effective method has been found to prevent those willing to risk apprehension in

the chance of securing profits from continuing the practice, a more effective control was established in 1927 when the penalty for overloading included revocation of the license to operate instead of merely being assessed against the driver as previously.³⁰

A basis was laid, but a modern highway system was not realized in the twenties. On the recommendation of the Highway Commissioner, a survey was begun in September, 1922, jointly with the Federal Bureau of Public Roads to secure the information necessary to the formulation of a highway program for Connecticut. Although the report was not immediately translated into action, the appropriation for highway construction in 1927 was twice that of the previous year, and these expenditures reached 12 million in 1928.³¹ Planning was begun, too, for what became Merritt Parkway to relieve traffic along the shoreline.³² The Assembly preferred to finance highway construction by motor vehicle fees rather than by bond issues and established a policy of "pay as you go," a policy held sacrosanct for four decades. The Assembly did not follow the Highway Commissioner's hope that gasoline taxes be earmarked for highway construction and gave the fiscal authorities latitude in borrowing from the general fund for the use of the Department.³³ A new era of highway development awaited the reorganization of the highway department in 1931.³⁴ Meanwhile, adjustments of Connecticut society to the motor age in connection with the perennial safety problem, financial responsibility for accidents, the relation of the courts to enforcement efforts and other problems incident to the motor age, were experimental.³⁵

The commodities manufactured by Connecticut firms were, for the most part, of small bulk and high value, which made them ideally suited for truck transportation. Especially for relatively short hauls, the industries tended to rely on the transportation companies in preference to operating their own trucks or to using the railroads. The opinion prevailed, however, that a permanent improvement of the railroad service would deflect a considerable portion of the long-haul motor truck traffic.³⁶

The Railroads

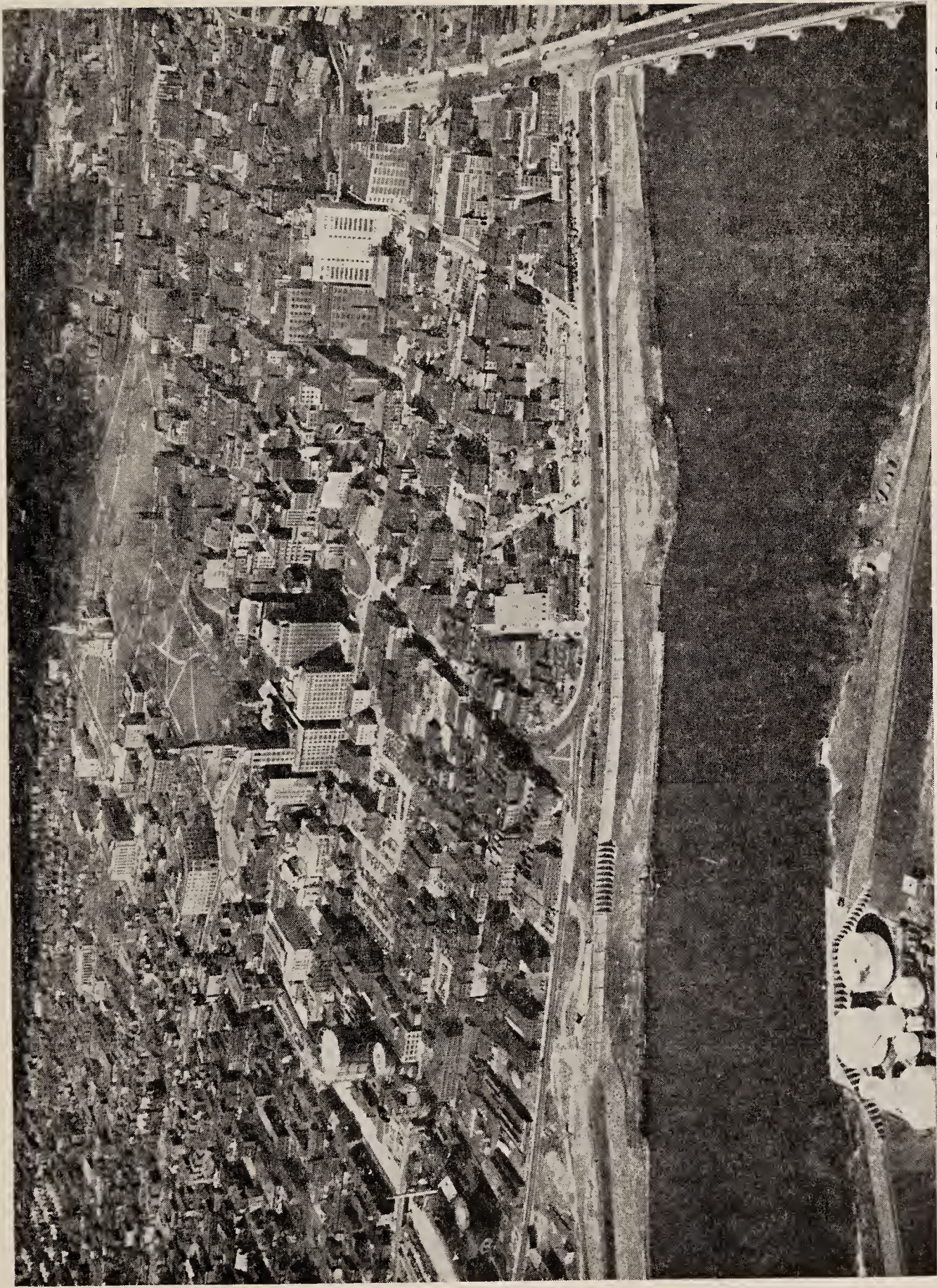
In the first years of the nineteen twenties, Connecticut railroads were in a poor position to provide the transportation necessary for an

expanding industry. It was agreed that the service had "not been as satisfactory" as the public was "reasonably entitled to expect."³⁷ The worn-out equipment, the severe winter of 1922-23, and the strike of the shop employees contributed to the poor service of the road. A state legislative committee viewed these as circumstances beyond management's control and exonerated the management of any grave responsibility.³⁸ The instances of mismanagement were too glaring to escape the attention of the investigating committee appointed by the Governors of the New England states. This group reported that the financial condition of the road was unsatisfactory and "must be set in order and its credit re-established before it can be expected to properly care for the people and the industries depending upon it."³⁹

The New Haven was near financial collapse largely in consequence of the expansionist policy followed from 1902 to 1913 by its President, Charles S. Mellen. This alleged puppet of J. P. Morgan, in an obvious effort to monopolize the transportation facilities of New England, gained control of three other railroads and partial control of another two, as well as control of nearly all of the street and interurban railways in Rhode Island and Connecticut, extensive mileage in Massachusetts, and lines into New York. Three steamship companies were, also, controlled.⁴⁰ Practically all of these properties, which had a book value of \$393,000,000, had been acquired by increasing the funded debt of the company. Public confidence in the company deteriorated in 1912 and 1913 as accidents increased and dividends decreased. In 1908, the company had artfully circumvented the cease and desist orders issued by the Massachusetts Supreme Court against monopolistic practices; in 1915, however, an investigation by the Interstate Commerce Commission brought the practices into focus. The program of expansion proved an abysmal failure. By 1922, the company had already written off its books losses amounting to \$55,000,000, and the remaining "outside investments" were of uncertain value. In few of the companies were earnings sufficient to pay fixed charges, much less to provide dividends. Manifestly, the New Haven had been kept afloat only by the almost ninety million dollars loaned by the federal government. In 1922, the road was operating at an annual deficit of over five million with little hope that its condition would improve in the immediate future.⁴¹

The New Haven system was judged inefficient in its technical operation and particularly unwise in its cargo control practices. In almost every critical measure of efficiency, the New Haven was operating, not only below accepted standards, but in most instances was rated lowest of any road in New England. For example, the average car miles per freight car day for the New Haven was lowest in 13.6 miles in comparison to the high of the Boston and Albany of 27.8. It was the unwise use of the "embargo," however, which the New England Governors' committee criticized most severely. These embargos were regularly used by railroad managers to avoid overloading. Connecting lines would be informed that they must cease permitting shippers to load cars for the home railroad. These embargos were almost always limited to permit the continued movement of essential goods. At times, however, the failure of the New Haven to impose limitations on shipments, and at other times the indiscriminate granting of shipping permits, allowed an excessive number of cars on the road and resulted in congestion. The strike of repair personnel, the resultant condition of motive power, and even the weather could have been largely countered by judicious cargo control, it was thought. In addition, when issued, the New Haven issued a general embargo, making every business transaction involving rail shipment subject to review by the road. Such a system denied the industries the opportunity of systematic ordering, of taking advantage of price breaks at their own discretion, and placed them completely at the mercy of the New Haven. It could not be expected that industry would choose rail transportation under these circumstances whenever other alternatives would serve.⁴²

To avoid receivership, the program suggested by the New England Governors' Committee of 1931 for the New Haven was, not consolidation as recommended by the Esch-Cummings Act, but "rehabilitation by cooperation." With assurances from management that many of the malpractices would be eliminated and in the expectation that there would be no substantial increase in the costs of such critical items as coal and wages, the New England Governors' Committee anticipated increased traffic on the main line and increased revenues from the subsidiaries. To assist in the financial reconstruction of the road, a read-



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justment of the road's capitalization was recommended, the New England states were asked to rebate at least a portion of the New Haven's taxes, and the federal government was requested to reduce the interest rates on its loans. The employees, it was said, "were New England men who would gladly lend a hand." The executives were appraised as men of "devotion and courage," whose fight to continue the road had been "a lonely struggle against heavy odds." The cause in the main, it was concluded, had been "the cause of New England," and it was time that "the people of New England appeared on the scene to lend it their aid."⁴³

Until the depression of 1929, the condition of the New Haven appeared to improve. Dividends on common stock were resumed in 1928, and it was reported that the road had no important debts maturing until 1940. There had been by 1929, a 10 percent reduction in the total operating costs as compared to that of 1922. During the same period, the company had spent \$92,000,000 for the improvement and betterment of the road which was reflected in improvements in the most critical measurements of efficiency. The total tax payments actually increased during the period from approximately five million in 1922 to eight million dollars in 1929.⁴⁴

It boded ill for the future, however, that the New Haven was not keeping pace proportionately with the industrial expansion in the state but was losing important traffic to the motor transports. The increase from 130 to 142 million dollars, reported in the operating revenue from 1922 to 1929, represented only about a 10 percent increase while the gross industrial product of the state had increased approximately four times as fast. The New Haven Company had entered the motor transport service belatedly and with uncertain success. Its first motor truck service was begun in 1929. Still lacking in the company's service, however, was the pick-up and delivery service for stores, which was advocated by some as necessary to compete with motor transportation. It would seem that the New Haven had merely been carried along by the industrial expansion of the state. That its operation remained marginal was apparent as the depression deepened: the road was incapable of surmounting the problems of a depression decade.⁴⁵

Labor

As Connecticut management resisted the federal government's proposal to further entrench its position by consolidating the railroads it resisted strongly the interference of the federal government in such matters as regulation of the hours of labor. During the war, the federal government had exerted some control over industrial affairs through such agencies as the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration and by such arrangements as the cost-plus contract. The intercession of the federal government in such matters was completely antithetical to Connecticut beliefs and was considered to breed labor trouble and discontent. The Industrial Investigator was in agreement with the views of the industrial-commercial element of society when she wrote that "federal interference in state and private business is dangerous." Nothing in the wartime overseeing of business, in her judgment, would "lead anyone to believe that the adoption of any suggestion from the Federal government as to how to run a business" would increase the general prosperity.⁴⁶

The orientation of government to business was not so extreme as to disallow the right to strike, which had been assured by a law of 1878, but neither had the state extended any real legal protection to the striking worker. In subsequent amendments, penalties for intimidation and for injury to property, particularly as interpreted by the courts in the twenties, effectively limited union activities. Workers could not be forced to join a union nor could a company be forced to permit the organization of its workers. Employers persistently equated the right of individual bargaining with democracy and identified the effort to maintain the open shop as the American Plan in an interpretation not unlike that of the Anti-Boycott League of previous years or the "right to work" movement of a later period. Open shop organizations were established throughout the state and when an industrial dispute arose, the Chamber of Commerce, often with the assistance of the Committee on Industrial Relations of the Connecticut Manufacturers, would offer assistance to the company experiencing labor difficulties. It proved possible to replace workers on strike in about two strikes out of five. In other instances the work was transferred to a different plant. Of the

195 strikes reported during the twenties, the owners' will prevailed in over 65 percent, compromises were negotiated in 25 percent, and the workers' demands were granted in only 19 instances or in 10 percent of the strikes. In the climate of opinion of the twenties, strikes did not prove an effective instrument of enforcing labor demands. There was a noticeable decline in the willingness of labor to use the strike in resolving its differences with management. The first two years of the decade saw 63 strikes; the last two years, only two.⁴⁷

Organized labor had made important gains during the war, but once the war was over organized labor lost favor and declined in influence throughout the decade, remaining relatively strong only in the building trades. The Connecticut Federation, with an effective membership of probably no more than 10,000 and a depleted treasury, was ill equipped to fight labor battles. Moreover, the objectives of organized labor were limited and pacific. The militancy necessary to combat the apathy of the General Assembly and the opposition of industry was lacking.⁴⁸ Employers, through the extension of paternalistic practices, through their own organizations, and by virtue of the favorable legal structure, were able to reduce the strength and independence of labor.

By voluntarily providing improved conditions, companies could dull the laborer's interest in organizing. If organized labor were not by this stripped of its *raison d'être*, yet urgency was removed. In the years following the war, companies, such as Yale and Towne of Stamford, New Departure of Bristol, and the Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Company, provided low-cost housing and recreational facilities and employed welfare workers to improve the moral and physical conditions among employees. By 1928, however, only a fraction of the work force of the state benefited from welfare programs. Out of an average work force in the state of 250,000, sickness and accident plans, which were in force in 44 plants, covered 59,953 employees; group life insurance plans in 150 plants, 61,523 employees; and pension plans in 79 plants, 116,583 employees. Such programs, undertaken at the volition of the employer, could be terminated at his discretion, but they delayed the introduction of a formal program of employee benefits.⁴⁹

The Workmen's Compensation Act of 1913, which had gained acceptance in principle, was not broadened significantly during the

twenties. A 1919 amendment had been interpreted in the courts so that the term "injury" had come to be defined as including any disease "due to causes peculiar to the occupation" and had come to cover a number of occupational diseases by the mid-twenties. In 1926, employers and insurance companies both believed that the Act should be amended and each drafted proposed changes. The Federation of Labor proposed a third variation which would have increased the scope of the Act to cover more employees. This was lost as the three groups agreed upon a compromise measure which passed the Assembly. The Federation had wanted accident insurance to be mandatory for all employers of three workers, rather than for the five as provided originally, and the Compensation Commissioner was in favor of having the Act cover all employees. At first it was thought that the opposition centered in the rural representatives, but they charged that it centered in the professional group who did not want their assistants involved.⁵⁰ In any event, the Act was not broadened.

Even in legislation concerning the employment of children there was only limited progress. Connecticut remained consistent in her policy that each child should receive a minimum education before entering employment, but other legislative advances concerning the employment of children were resisted. After federal restrictions against the employment of children under 16 years of age were declared unconstitutional, the state's restrictions on the employment of children between the ages of 14 and 16 were virtually eliminated. All doubts as to the state's position on child labor were removed when the Senate of the General Assembly refused to ratify without a hearing a child labor amendment submitted to it by the United States Congress and when the House of the Assembly defeated it by the overwhelming vote of 231 to 7.⁵¹

The effect which the immigrant had on the Connecticut labor scene remains a matter of conjecture. The 80,000 Italians were the most numerous among the foreign born in 1920. The Polish immigrants came next with 46,000, and the Irish, who for the first time were not the most numerous group, followed closely with 45,000. Partially as a result of the Immigration Act of 1924, the proportion of foreign white stock in the population decreased during the decade. In the first year after the passage of the 1924 immigration law, 6,447 aliens came into

the state, but this was only half as many as had come in the previous year. The fact that there were 19,000 aliens reported to be seeking employment in the state in 1926 was not viewed with alarm, and one contemporary comment minimized the social problem by pointing to the future needs of the state. Many of the immigrants were found in the building trades where the unions were strongest. On the other hand, since the immigrants comprised 40 percent of the gainfully employed and since only one in three immigrants was naturalized, the potential influence which labor could have on the choice of public officials and upon their inclination to favor labor legislation was disproportionately less than their number. In the 1920's, only the Irish were effective in political activities.⁵²

The continued subservience of labor to industry was assured by the failure to prevent some of the abuses of the injunction. Not until 1927 was a bill presented to the Assembly which would have permitted the party enjoined to recover damages if a temporary injunction were not made permanent. The industries of the state did not even have to muster its forces. The bill was peremptorily defeated by the Assembly.⁵³

In all, it was a combination of circumstances which contributed to the unfavorable labor climate: the domination of the General Assembly by the business and farming communities and the corresponding lack of influence of the laborers, the aggressive and effective program of the business interests as compared to the ineffective and almost insipid programs of organized labor, and a public which was lulled into a political amorphism by the pervasive appearances of prosperity, all were contributory. The result was that the average work week and wages remained practically the same during the twenties. A proposed minimum wage was rejected by the Assembly in 1919 and again in 1921. In 1923, such legislation was not even proposed, for, not only were jobs less scarce, but the legality of such a proposal was called into question and subsequently denied by the Supreme Court.⁵⁴ In the absence of legislation fixing minimum wages, they remained essentially the same throughout the decade, as did the hours worked per week. It was reported that skilled workers in the hardware industry worked 44, 48, 55, and more hours per week, both at the beginning and the end of the decade. The range in hourly wage from 52 to 90 cents also prevailed

throughout the period.⁵⁵ Moreover, while the hourly wage remained approximately the same as during the war years, there was less overtime pay; therefore, the weekly wage of the laborer decreased. Also, it was estimated that the dollar in 1924 was worth 60 percent of its 1913 value. As real wages thus declined, labor tended to blame the farmer for the high cost of living.⁵⁶

Farmers Adopt Business Methods

Agricultural leaders denied vehemently that the farmer was solely responsible for the admittedly high prices. Labor, too, had a responsibility, it was claimed. It was argued that it was unreasonable for manufacturers to expect the farmer to reduce the cost of living by selling produce at a loss in order that labor would be willing to take a lower wage. The scarcity of labor, the cost of machinery, the difficulties of transportation, and even daylight savings time were cited as having increased the cost of farm production as much as 20 percent. It was argued further that the middleman received the major part of the dollar which the consumer spent for produce with only 35 percent of it being received by the farmer.⁵⁷

To an increasing extent, Connecticut farmers during the decade turned to organized marketing procedures. Dairymen and poultrymen led in the practice, and efforts were made to extend it in the marketing of perishables. The Connecticut farmer had taken advantage of his nearness to market to offer all quality of produce for sale, but the advent of the chain store and the competition of southern and western markets made uniform grading and packaging desirable. The ability of the dairy industry to withstand business depressions attracted other farmers to cooperative marketing. One fourth of the \$28,000,000 value of crops raised and practically all of the 55 million gallons of whole milk and the 11 million dozen of eggs marketed annually at the end of the decade were sold through cooperatives. The decade's end saw Connecticut farmers devoting their attention to those products for which a market was readily available in the urban centers.⁵⁸

It was recognized that if rural communities were to survive they would have to compete with cities in supplying good living conditions. To make a farm house a farm home became a slogan of the twenties. In



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

BRIDGEPORT—STATUE OF P. T. BARNUM AT SEASIDE PARK

1920, a rural youth between five and 20 years of age was as likely to go to school as was his urban cousin, and it was held that a greater number of rural youths would go to college than did, if they could afford it. The introduction of the radio brought entertainment as well as the market reports into farm homes. In 1928 farm and power leaders met and charted a course that was to result ultimately in the electrification of rural Connecticut. A beginning was made the next year, when 250 miles of line were strung in rural Connecticut to provide electricity to

1,000 additional homes. The drift of population to the cities had slowed perceptibly. Since 1910, 65.6 percent of Connecticut's population lived in urban areas. This percentage had increased to 70.4 by 1930, but aroused little concern. Even the decrease in the number of farms from 22,655 in 1920 to 17,195 in 1930 was not viewed with alarm. Some had been absorbed to meet urban demands for reservoirs and parks; others became homes for those whom the automobile enabled to live a distance from their employment. If there were an alternative use, there was no insistence that the marginal lands of Connecticut be tilled.⁵⁹

The Connecticut farmer reflected the optimism of the era. He had pulled through the post-war years to see the price for perishables, such as fruits, and for staples, such as potatoes, in every instance higher in 1925 than the average price for the previous five years. Intensive farming, concentration upon perishables, and the introduction of marketing techniques enabled the farmer to enjoy a high gross income for most of the decade. The price of milk increased in 1928 and sales achieved a higher dollar volume in 1929 than in the previous year. The poultry industry had grown to the point it was hardly affected by the first months of the depression of 1929. The value of the potato crop remained at about three and three quarter million. Vegetables had increased in importance by 1929 although problems attending their marketing had not been completely solved.⁶⁰

Signs of prosperity appeared, too, in the balance sheets of industrial and financial institutions. Not only had the value of Connecticut's manufactured products increased by 76 percent over that of 1921, but it had increased in a greater proportion than the amount spent for wages (48 percent) or for materials (60 percent) during the same period. Moreover, the value of Connecticut's products had increased at a greater rate than that of the nation as a whole. The apparent well-being of Connecticut is further emphasized by comparison with Michigan, which was riding the crest of the automobile industry in the twenties. Although the value of products produced in Michigan was more than three times that of Connecticut's, the ratio of material and wages to the value of the product was 1 to 1.45 in Connecticut, while in Michigan it was 1 to 1.36.⁶¹ Meanwhile, the deposits in the savings banks had increased steadily during the decade and reached the amount of \$626,-

000,000 in 1929. The banks had approximately doubled their investments in real estate.⁶² The Tax Commissioner reported that, item by item, the general increase in revenue reflected the increasing prosperity of the state during the period 1925 to 1929. What might have seemed as sure an index to a prosperous era was the increase in the amusement and admission taxes collected.⁶³

There were signs, however, which in retrospect pointed to weak spots in the economy. Industrial expansion had continued, but had slowed perceptibly in the latter part of the decade.⁶⁴ Connecticut's habits of thrift were apparent in the nearly one million savings accounts held by the banks and by the increase in the total amount of the deposits. More indicative of the general economic situation may have been the fact that the number of accounts of over 10,000 dollars increased almost 400 percent in the years from 1923 to 1929 while the smaller accounts increased in number by only 14 percent.⁶⁵ The maintenance of an economy in which prices continued to increase and wages remained more or less constant depended upon an expansion of credit. An orgy of buying on credit swept over the state in 1924 and continued to increase throughout the decade. A new form of credit, installment buying, was introduced and the usual monthly credit was expanded. As the relations between customer and merchandiser grew less personal, the establishments checked on customers' credit through credit bureaus. Installment buying was introduced by the furniture industry, was perfected by the automobile industry, and was expanded until most of the necessities were sold on some type of deferred payment. Inevitably, there were instances when purchasers did not exercise prudent restraint and instances when the privilege was extended too freely. The extended credit, increased installment buying, and introduction of small loan companies suggested that the consumer had exceeded safe margins.⁶⁶ It was against this background that the New York stock market crashed on October 24, 1929. It was immediately reflected in the stocks of Connecticut companies and in the general economy.

The real extent and seriousness of the depression, however, settled but slowly upon Connecticut's consciousness. More than 50,000, or 7.5 percent, of the state's working force were looking for jobs by April, 1930. These were, of course, concentrated in the larger cities, the centers

of the manufacturing and mechanical industries. The building trades and the iron and steel workers were first to be affected. The clothing industry and the textile mills, too, quickly responded to the depressed conditions.⁶⁷ The greatest distress was to be found among the unskilled.⁶⁸ Unemployment was immediately reflected in the mercantile establishments, which were forced to cut prices to dispose of their inventories.⁶⁹ The press, the Chamber of Commerce, public officials, and industrial leaders joined in the opinion that the slump was temporary and that the state's diversity of product and its resources would protect it from prolonged economic distress.⁷⁰ Until the Fall of 1930 the "usual relief agencies" handled the problems attending the unemployment.⁷¹ In 1929, neither the state nor the cities had increased expenditures for poor relief appreciably. By 1930, however, both state and local governments took steps to alleviate the distress. The amount of monies expended by the state for the relief of those outside institutions was increased by 44 percent, yet the main burden was assumed by local communities. The monies spent by urban communities were almost doubled in 1930. These were the centers of distress. They were likewise the areas in which the Democrats had sustained a thread of hope during the years of the Republican domination of the Governor's office.⁷²

Time for a Change

The Democrats had little chance of electing a Governor during the twenties, but the additional challenges during that decade to the citizen's concept of respectability in public office when coupled with the depressed economic conditions created a basis for a new ascendancy of the Democratic Party. As in earlier years, the continuance of command of public office led to carelessness. Republicans suffered embarrassment in 1924 when the state Treasurer, G. Harold Gilpatric, shot himself for fear of being apprehended for the embezzlement of the funds of a Putnam bank with which he was connected. Before the conclusion of the course of events entrained by this, it was discovered that almost 1500 bills had been signed by Governors after the expiration of the time limit prescribed by the constitution. The Supreme Court of Errors viewed these acts as an arrogation of power by the executive branch of government. The Republican-dominated Assembly was called into

session to give a semblance of legality to much of the legislation presumably enacted in the past 15 years. The Public Utilities Commission, which was completely dominated by Roraback had permitted the New Haven Railroad to disregard a law which required the New Haven Railroad to remove one grade crossing for each fifty miles of track. The failure was overlooked until a dissident Republican, Albert Levitt of Redding, assumed the responsibility of driving Roraback from power. Levitt petitioned the Attorney General to begin ouster proceedings against the Public Utilities Commission. When this was refused, Levitt secured a writ of mandamus forcing the Attorney General to act. The Attorney General appealed to Supreme Court which ordered that he take action. On election day the Court was reexamining the case on the request of the Attorney General. While Levitt was unable to capitalize on the incident for his own personal advantage, the case was covered in detail by the national press to the embarrassment of the Republican Party. The party itself had lost some cohesion in consequence of the intervention of Roraback in 1928 to prevent the nomination of Congressman John Tilson for Vice President of the United States. The Party image was not lightened by the censure by the United States Senate of Hiram S. Bingham for carrying on his payroll one who was on the payroll of the Connecticut Manufacturers Association. During the Al Smith campaign of 1928 certain young men, unfettered by connections with Roraback and ambitious for victory, were attracted to the Democratic Party.⁷³

The beneficiary in this political milieu was Wilbur Cross, with whom began the renaissance of the Democratic Party in Connecticut. In political thought, he was a conservative; in speech, mildly progressive; in personal conduct, a liberal, who yet conformed to the accepted bounds of respectability. Cross combined the whimsical wit of his rural Mansfield with the cultured urbanity of Yale where he became a distinguished professor, editor, and administrator. He permitted himself to be wooed by the "new guard" Democrats to be a candidate for Governor, and, at the Party's convention, his stand against the "old guard" forced a compromise which fashioned a ticket that held the party together.⁷⁴

An analysis indicated to Cross that a majority of voters was affiliated

with neither party and that the independent vote would determine the victor of the next election. Cross reasoned then that the campaign should be waged on issues. He favored the repeal of the Volstead Act and prohibition, supported the improvement of dirt roads, proposed



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

WATERBURY

steps for relieving the inadequate provisions for the treatment of tubercular patients, and endorsed old age pensions. For Governor, the Republicans nominated Lieutenant Governor Ernest E. Rogers, a former President of the Connecticut Chamber of Commerce, by which they lent credence to Cross' assertion that the Republican nominee would be but "a shadow of another man." The Republican call for a balanced budget had a familiar ring, but one out of tune with the depressed economic conditions. The ambivalent position on prohibition, adopted

by the Republicans at Roraback's insistence, placed Rogers at a disadvantage in a state generally conceded as "wet," and the Republican call for better rural roads did not transcend the appeal of their opponents.⁷⁵

The most grievous error of the Republicans was to make an attack upon Cross himself central to their campaign. Attempts to discount the "pedagogue in politics" by decrying the lack of political experience of "the dear old gentleman down at Yale" were not successful. Neither Roraback nor his lieutenants were a match for Cross in repartee, and he turned the Republican thrusts to his advantage. Cross was able to identify himself with the interests of the farmers in rural areas and those of the laborers in cities without arousing the militant opposition of the guardians of the past. The result was not a revolution, but it was a personal victory for Cross. His majority of about 5,000 was insufficient to elect any other candidates on the Democratic ticket. The victory indicated a degree of disenchantment with Rorabackism, an economic climate which called for change, and Cross' personal strength to capitalize on the errors of his opponents and to identify himself with contemporary Connecticut.⁷⁶

Connecticut viewed prohibition, not as a promising experiment, but as an hypothesis which had long since been tried and discarded. In 1854, Connecticut had passed a prohibition law which had proved ineffectual. Governor Dutton, who had signed the law, charged that its failure was due to the temperance men themselves who permitted enforcement "to go right into the hands of men who did not care a straw for the law, and who made use of it for the purpose of making money." In lieu of state-wide prohibition, Connecticut had developed a local option law under which a town, upon petition of 10 percent of its voters, could vote no more than once a year upon prohibition, choosing absolute prohibition or the sale of spirituous liquors under a licensing system.⁷⁷ In 1920, there were 2,000 saloons operating under the license plan in approximately 70 towns in which more than 80 percent of the state's population resided.⁷⁸ If the system were not all that the prohibitionists desired, it apparently had the consent of the majority of the citizens.

When the Eighteenth Amendment was formally ratified many in

Connecticut considered it foredoomed to failure and a protest was voiced by private citizens and by public officials. The liquor dealers of the state joined the National Association of Liquor Dealers in efforts to have the courts set aside the ratification. The chorus of protest was attributed to the alien, Catholic population which congregated in the cities, many of whom, it was charged, were accustomed to the unrestricted use of alcoholic stimulants. The part played by the foreign born in this opposition was studied by Constantine Panunzio, who concluded that "by and large the foreign born . . . followed the lead of the American community in their practice in regard to prohibition."⁷⁹ In any case, "Old Yankee" elements concurred and articulated Connecticut's opposition. The political machinery and the public institutions of the state had remained strongly "Yankee" and it was here that Connecticut's opposition was most effectively articulated. The press of the state was consistently and strongly opposed; the Assembly refused to ratify the amendment.⁸⁰

Connecticut framed her opposition to prohibition in terms of the tenets of states' rights and personal liberty and was consistent in her position until the act was repealed. In Connecticut, in 1920, the Democratic platform said the amendment was "an indefensible curtailment of personal liberty," and the Republicans were equally opposed. Governor Templeton, even as he called for the enforcement of the act, suggested that possibly a majority of the people "felt it was an infringement of their personal rights." Lucius Robinson, one of the foremost opponents of the bill, stated in 1933 that fundamentally the fight had been "against the tyranny inherent in an attempt to put a free people into a strait-jacket." Connecticut, always sensitive to the potential encroachment of outside influences, saw in the Prohibition Act an intrusion of Federal authority. It was pointed out that police powers were properly vested in the state. The Democrats asked that the Federal government return all the power which it had usurped. When the amendment was finally repealed, Connecticut hailed the action as "returning to the several states their constitutional rights to govern themselves without interference from the Federal government." To the delegates assembled to ratify repeal, Wilbur Cross, then the Democratic Governor, quoted the Republican platform of 1860 on the inviolate rights of the states.⁸¹

During the period of prohibition, Connecticut assumed an official position in support of government by law. Citizens were admonished that "violation of this law must inevitably lead to a breakdown of respect for all law and such a situation cannot be tolerated in Connecticut."⁸² Governor after Governor reiterated this warning emphasizing that orderly government required obedience to law.⁸³ Despite the existent disparity between theory and practice, the constitutional position which Connecticut had assumed in regard to this law which was odious to her was clear. In calling for the legislation necessary to insure the enforcement of the act, Governor Lake told the Assembly bluntly "that your ratification of the amendment or your failure to ratify it, has no bearing whatever upon your duty to enact legislation which shall insure the positive enforcement of this act."⁸⁴

The legislation enacted in 1921 was in accordance with the national Prohibition Act. The definition of spirituous liquors and the search and seizure provision were believed adequate to assure enforcement. Additional provisions fixing as an accessory all persons accompanying those engaged in the transportation of liquor and establishing the possession of five gallons or more of liquor as prima-facie evidence of engaging in trade were regarded favorably by the Anti-Saloon League.⁸⁵

In Connecticut, enforcement was complicated by the entrenched licensing system. It had been established that fees would be refunded if licenses were surrendered within a certain period. Many dealers held their licenses beyond this period apparently in the expectation that prohibition would not govern in the post-war period. Subsequently, after the expiration of the time allowed, claims for refunds were filed and the matter was brought before the Assembly which granted no relief. Apparently while the matter of the license fee refund was at issue and the license still held, even though it lacked legal force, saloons continued to operate. The Anti-Saloon League reported that 2,068 saloons existed in Connecticut when prohibition became effective and that 805 of these had continued and were in operation in 1922.⁸⁶

Enforcement, it was charged, was hampered by a provision that fines imposed in appealed cases would be paid into the state treasury, whereas those imposed by lower courts would be paid to the town. Since

the higher courts in many cases reduced the fines imposed by the lower courts, appeals were encouraged. The threat of potential appeal was a lever by which towns could be coerced into smaller penalties, otherwise they bore the cost of prosecution without recompense.⁸⁷

The greatest support for the enforcement of prohibition apparently came in the first years after the enactment of the measure. The Report of the state police indicated in 1923 that there was a "widespread interest" in the enforcement of the laws. In the same year an investigation into court methods and procedures was followed by conferences between Chief Justice George M. Wheeler and groups of judges and attorneys and resulted in more vigorous prosecution and greater uniformity in penalties. In March, 1924, the State's Attorney, Hugh M. Alcorn, had subpoenas issued to 20 of Hartford's prominent lawyers and doctors whose names appeared on what was presumed to be a customers' list and these were scathingly denounced by Judge William M. Maltbie for their part in illegal liquor traffic. Both the Federal Prohibition Department and the State of Connecticut reported greater activity in the early period. Seventeen percent of all the arrests made by the state police between July 1923 and June 1924 represented violations of the Prohibition Amendment and this was higher than for other years. Patrick J. O'Sullivan, who, as a Representative from the Fifth District, had introduced bills to legalize beer, was defeated when he ran for reelection in 1924. However, the Assembly in 1925 refused to provide for stronger enforcement of the law. Connecticut would not exceed the enforcement requirements of the Federal Government, but within these limits would prosecute to the extent demanded by the public.⁸⁸

A precise determination of the effect of prohibition on Connecticut life seems indeterminable. Statistics advanced by public officials, the Anti-Saloon League, and others leave many questions unanswered. Case studies made in the cities of Stamford, New Haven, and Hartford and reported to the Association of Organized Family Social Workers indicate a marked decrease from 1917 to 1922 in the percentage of the cases of dependency which were caused by intemperance. However, it might be asked whether in a climate of opinion, such as that of 1922, which demanded observance of prohibition, intemperance would be as readily

reported or as easily discerned as in later years of the decade when legal restraints were generally all but disregarded. All social statistics, including the percentage of patients admitted to the Connecticut State Hospital for alcoholic psychosis, show a similar trend in the early years of Prohibition, which suggests that to be effective legal restraint must secure a margin of consent. This margin seems not to have been long maintained by the Connecticut populace and as it narrowed adherence was limited to an official acquiescence to the form, but not to the spirit of the law.⁸⁹

Public support for prohibition all but vanished in the years before its ultimate repeal. Irving Fisher reported in 1930 that many leading citizens "who never before used intoxicating liquors now serve them in their homes as an outspoken protest against the restriction of their social rights."⁹⁰ Fisher reported that the heads of the insurance companies of Hartford were almost to a man opposed to Prohibition. The faculty and students of Yale registered their opposition. J. H. Barnett reported that in the academic year 1927-28, 35 of some 58 seniors questioned in Connecticut colleges favored repeal. In the same year, he reported, 56 out of 83 principals of Connecticut high schools replied that drinking was not a problem in the social life of the schools and 75 declared that it was of no importance in the discipline of the schools. In 1929, the Anti-Saloon League reported "a decided apathy" in the teaching of the effects of alcohol in the schools. Connecticut, however, apparently was not in the vanguard of the states who were demanding repeal. Barnett found Connecticut seniors less insistent upon repeal, for example, than those of seven other states. True to character, Connecticut struck a middle road. Even as late as 1929 a revision which was made in the laws was viewed favorably by the Anti-Saloon League. However, the National Committee on the Enforcement of Prohibition reported in 1931 that the enforcement of the law had almost broken down.⁹¹

To the mounting voices of dissent was added the anguish of the depression. The Democratic Party in its convention in 1932 sensed that it was time for a change. It was determined that the Party would stand for repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. When Congress modified the Volstead Act, Connecticut acted quickly. At a special election in

June 1933, Connecticut approved repeal of the Amendment and selected delegates who met in Hartford on July 11, 1933. The delegates voted unanimously to ratify the Twenty-first Amendment interpreted as relieving the people of the state from the hated tyranny which had been imposed.⁹²



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

HARTFORD HOSPITAL

Despite a long-standing interest in women's rights which had been expressed in Connecticut, the state failed, when it had the opportunity, to cast the decisive vote to accomplish ratification of the amendment granting suffrage to women. The so-called Susan B. Anthony Amendment was approved in 1919 and, by the Spring of 1920, had been ratified by 35 states, one short of the two-thirds vote necessary for approval. Twelve states had rejected the amendment and three, Tennessee, Ver-

mont, and Connecticut, had not acted. If J. Henry Roraback and Governor Marcus Holcombe had had their way, Connecticut would never have acted. Roraback refused to take seriously the platform of the Republican Party which had endorsed the amendment, and Holcomb adamantly refused to call a special session of the Assembly to consider the Amendment. Meanwhile, just prior to the Democratic National Convention, President Wilson appealed to the Governor of Tennessee, who called a special session of the Tennessee Legislature for the early part of August. By that time, it became evident that Governor Holcomb did not represent the will of a majority of the business community or of the General Assembly. The Amendment was finally approved unanimously by the Senate and by a vote of 216 to 2 in the House in a special session of the Assembly in September, 1920.⁹³

The move for the rights of women had its roots deep in Connecticut history. Emma Willard, Almira Phelps, and Catherine Beecher, in the first half of the century, gave an impetus to the emancipation of women which was pursued in the latter half of the century by such leaders as Anna Dickinson, Isabella Beecher Hooker and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. In the twentieth century Katherine Hepburn, Emily Pierson, Katherine Lydington, and M. Toscan Bennet kept the issue before the state. Efforts on behalf of women led to their admission to institutions of higher learning and to the professions. The position of women was advanced by legislation which accorded them equal property rights and made them eligible to serve on certain public boards. Nevertheless, the Assembly had turned from the demands for equal suffrage rights in the years from 1867 to 1915. The only concession granted was that of 1893 when women were allowed to vote in the election of school boards. Privileges had followed the demonstration of abilities, especially during the war, in factories and in countless volunteer agencies.⁹⁴

At the end of the decade 26 percent, or 178,368 women as compared to 498,924 men, were among the state's gainfully employed. More women continued to be employed in domestic service than in any other occupation, but those in industry were no longer being shunted to the least desirable positions. In 1914, women constituted 40 percent of the labor force engaged in manufacturing and by 1929 they represented

only 27 percent of the total. More and more women entered the professional and semi-professional positions and came to outnumber men almost two to one. Working girls showed a preference for working as typists even though the salaries were lower than for clerks in industry. Women predominated in such areas as teaching and nursing and were being attracted to such fields as architecture and interior decorating.⁹⁵

When women in large numbers first joined the labor force there resulted a higher standard of living. A continuous rise in prices and relatively constant wages over a period of several years made it almost impossible for a single salary to suffice for a family and motivated women to seek employment.⁹⁶ As the impact of the depression became more grave, however, questions were raised as to the ethics of a married woman's holding a job and thereby denying employment to a single girl or to a man. Some employers, including the insurance companies, gave preference when hiring women to single persons.⁹⁷

Despite the number of women among the employed, legislation especially designed for their benefit was limited. The humanitarian argument for shorter hours for women, including evidence of the harmful effects of long hours and assertions that a reduction of hours did not reduce the quantity of production, was dismissed by charges that the reformers were not competent in the matters they argued. Alpheus Winter of Bridgeport suggested that, rather than "punish" industry for the ill health of a few "weak women," these should enter domestic service or be supported by charitable contributions such as those to the community chests, which, Winter asserted, were supported by large industry.⁹⁸ The only advances made were the limitation of the legal work week in mercantile establishments to 50 hours and the extension of the regulation forbidding work after ten o'clock in the evening in industry to billiard halls, bowling alleys, restaurants, and cafes.⁹⁹

The state had opposed the Federal imposition of Prohibition in the name of individual rights; the state had accepted the Federal enactment of women suffrage and had gradually extended opportunities to women in the name of individual rights. Concurrently, a challenge of Connecticut's position on birth control was initiated, and, again, protest was framed in terms of economics, health, and finally individual rights.

Connecticut, in 1879, defined its position on birth control in a law patterned on the Federal Comstock Act and similar to acts adopted in many states of the nation. The Comstock Act to suppress obscenity and vice had been passed in 1873 and included literature on contraception and contraceptives as obscenities which could not be imported or distributed through the United States mail service. The Connecticut statute was the most sweeping statute enacted by any state and forbade the dissemination of information on contraception and the distribution and use of contraceptives. The Connecticut law was uncontested for half a century. In the winter of 1922-23 a Connecticut branch of the American Birth Control League was formed and supported the bill introduced by Representative Samuel Sisisky to except doctors and nurses from the Connecticut statute governing birth control.¹⁰¹ During the decade the challenges of Connecticut's position focused upon the Assembly. Protest was sustained primarily by the Birth Control League in this period, although the League's efforts were reenforced at the end of the decade by the Congregational churches of Connecticut. The one major and effective opponent to reform was the Roman Catholic Church.

The efforts made in support of the Sisisky Bill by Mrs. Thomas Hepburn and the handful of women in the newly formed Birth Control League in Connecticut were reenforced by the arguments presented by Margaret Sanger, from whose work had grown the national birth control association. It was argued that the bill would reduce the relief burden of the state, alleviate economic conditions among the poor, promote marital harmony, reduce abortion, and provide eugenic benefits. To meet the Catholic charge of immorality, it was argued that the bill violated natural law no more than celibacy. Opposition was led by Bishop John G. Murray of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hartford, who appealed to the Judiciary Committee's respect for morality, religion, patriotism, and motherhood. The Judiciary Committee returned an unfavorable report on the proposed change. This was the fate of similar proposals in 1925 and 1927. In 1925, however, the committee noted that the bill had merit, but concluded that "it was unwise to change the law at the present time." In 1927, a variant reform measure which simply proposed rescission of the existent law, rather than attempting to secure a special authorization for doctors

and nurses, received an unfavorable report only by a majority of one vote. In the last session of the Assembly in the decade, the League concentrated its efforts in support of simple rescission and was supported by the Congregational Churches of Connecticut. In this session the bill reached the floor of the House, where the committee's unfavorable report was sustained by a vote of 226-18. Charges that the Connecticut law transgressed upon a physician's responsibility and invaded personal liberties had been added, but did not avail against the Catholic dogma that modification would legalize unpardonable sin against a natural moral law. Dissent continued and received expression in subsequent Connecticut history as relief from Connecticut's law was sought in the courts as well as in the Assembly.¹⁰²

In addition to implementing Federal legislation in the areas of prohibition, women's suffrage, and birth control to achieve a general imposition of controversial conclusions, Connecticut faced, in the post-war decade, continuing social problems in health and welfare, some of which were attendant upon urbanization.

Although a boom in real estate followed the war, housing conditions for the industrial worker were not improved. Those with moderate incomes, especially salaried employees, sought a plot of land in the semi-urban area where they could build a bungalow, have a garden and chickens and commute to work by trolley or automobile. Those who could not afford the single family dwellings selling for about \$5,000 turned to two-family dwellings in town. Investment funds were attracted to apartment house construction, particularly in the larger cities. With the decrease in domestic service, older couples found in them more comfortable living. For younger married couples, in instances where the wife worked, it was a method for decreasing domestic areas and saving money for radios, automobiles, and other consumer goods. Young women, teachers, clerks, and others, flocked to the city to staff its necessary services. With this shift in population groups, investment monies were no longer attracted to the construction of tenement houses. As a result workers were herded into old homes, converted into multiple living units. They stayed until they saved enough money to purchase a home of their own and were followed by successive waves of foreigners and negroes. As owners sought to realize the greatest prof-

its, such structures went unrepaired and inevitably developed into slum areas where were found children "caked and flaked with dirt" and women who had "dickered away all that was woman" against a backdrop of "rabbit hole shops." State or public housing was renounced as a way of solving the issue and the problem of housing for the wage earner was passed on to vex subsequent generations.¹⁰³

To relieve the crowded conditions of the cities, certain recreational outlets, such as the new motion pictures, were provided within the metropolis and public parks and forests offered respite. Since 1902, the state had been adding an average of 400 acres a year to its forests. In addition, between 1913 and 1930, the state secured 10,000 acres for recreational purposes. The need for additional recreational facilities was accentuated not only by the increase in population and its concentration in the cities, but also by the increasing number of large estates, multiplication of houses on the shore, and the growing tendency of farmers to post their lands against trespassing. A more liberal appropriation made possible the acquisition of more fishing rights, but many of the state's parks remained unimproved for lack of funds. The most popular spot was Hammonasset, which opened in July, 1920, and which a decade later was attracting 650,000 each year.¹⁰⁴

The changes in the routine of daily living were nowhere more evident than when people purchased their daily provisions. The corner grocery and the general store began to vanish. Department stores grew until specialty shops could be found only in the larger cities and there only in decreasing numbers. Millinery shops, for example, all but disappeared. Chain stores expanded in size and number so that they were to be found in many new areas. The Atlantic and Pacific and Grand Union were leaders among the food stores; Woolworth and Kresge reigned among their type, while Grant's made headway.¹⁰⁵

To care for the defective and the delinquent, the state continued to take over some of the private institutions and to create special institutions of its own. Special institutions for those afflicted with tuberculosis and those who were mentally ill had been opened in the early years of the century. In 1917 the Mansfield Training School for the epileptic and mentally retarded was established. The state assumed additional responsibility with the purchase of the Mystic Oral School



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

ROCKY NECK BEACH STATE PARK VIEWS

in 1919, when it took over Long Lane School for delinquent girls in 1921, and by the contribution of \$500,000 for the erection of a new school for the deaf and dumb in West Hartford in 1922. In an administrative reorganization to meet these additional responsibilities, the State Board of Charities was renamed the Department of Public Welfare in 1921. The State Department of Health, which had replaced the State Board of Health in 1917, added a Department of Child Welfare in 1921 as a new concern for children developed.¹⁰⁶ Prudent economy, if not parsimony, continued to be the watchword in the fiscal administration of the institutions. By the end of the decade, practically all were overcrowded. The condition at the Mansfield Training School, for example, was so bad as to suggest the desirability of another institution for the mentally defective.¹⁰⁷

The state was even more cautious in introducing an adequate and satisfactory method of caring for the indigent. Although the system of almshouses was neither efficient nor economical and in spite of the difficulties of outdoor relief, the Assembly steadfastly refused to eliminate the outworn system. County homes had been established to care for those children who would otherwise go to almshouses in the expectation that these children could be placed with families. This proved unsatisfactory since once children entered the county homes, they seldom left, and the result was that the homes continued to increase in size. A proposal, at the end of the decade, to allow towns within a county to unite for the purpose of maintaining joint institutions failed to receive the support of the Assembly and Connecticut faced the depression with an outworn system of poor relief.¹⁰⁸ Connecticut indicated the degree of its reluctance to assume the financial burden for those committed to institutions by arranging for the attachment of the estate of an afflicted person and to the extent that this did not cover costs to insist that these be assessed against the persons or estates of relatives as far removed as a grandfather or a grandchild.¹⁰⁹

Private social agencies developed to breach the gap between adequate governmental programs and the needs of sick and defective. Over 100 such national agencies had sprung up by 1930, according to the report of the Department of Public Welfare in Connecticut, which was responsible for licensing solicitations by such groups. In the opinion of

the Welfare Commissioner, most of these did not need the support requested. Of those applying for licenses in Connecticut, 24 were granted and an unspecified number refused. The Commissioner implied that other solicitations were made by fraudulent and unethical agencies and that prominent Connecticut citizens were carelessly lending their names to "organizations whose objects seem charitable but which are being promoted by unethical money-raisers whose chief object is the creation of jobs for themselves and others."¹¹⁰ Even the investigations and corrections of conditions recorded by the Commissioner as accomplishments, however, documented the need for citizens' awareness and interest. For example, the department conferred with the management of a mental institution about the use of leather arm and foot straps to constantly restrain bed patients and reported that an attempt was then being made to have these patients dressed and about the wards each day. Again the abuse of inmates of a mental hospital by attendants was investigated and resulted in the discharge of certain employees. The practice of confining 80 men in a small cage in a county jail was reported discontinued upon the Department's recommendation. The practice of two large general hospitals of dismissing dying patients in order to reduce the death rates on their records was investigated by the Department but "the division of authority between the superintendent and the chief of medical staff makes the fixing of responsibility difficult." As the Commissioner stated "abuses that are found to exist are quietly corrected with a view of strengthening the management of the institution, at the same time protecting the unfortunate inmate."¹¹¹ The citizens' groups claimed a role in broadening state services in the next decade as attention focused on urgent needs.

NOTES—CHAPTER XXXI

¹ Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 71-79; "Statement of Vote," 1920-28, 1920, 1922, 1924, 1926, 1928; Register and Manual, 1919-29.

² The most complete account of Roraback's political career is contained in his obituary in the *Hartford Courant*, May 19, 1937. See, also, Bulkley S. Griffin, "Roraback of Connecticut," *New Republic*, Vol. 65, Nov. 26, 1930, pp. 41-43; Allen B. MacMurphy, "Revolt in Connecticut," *The Nation*, Vol. 131, Sept. 10, 1930, pp. 263-64; Seitz, "Connecticut, A Nation in Miniature," *The Nation*, Vol. 116, Apr. 18, 1923, p. 462; George Clapp, "The Kaiser of Connecticut," *American Mercury*, Vol. 29, June, 1933, p. 230; Raymond Baldwin, *Let's Go into Politics* (New York, 1932), pp. 48-49; Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," p. 179.

- ³ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-108, 121-28; Seitz, "Connecticut, A Nation in Miniature," *The Nation*, Vol. 116, Apr. 18, 1923, p. 462; Griffin, "Roraback of Connecticut," *New Republic*, Vol. 65, Nov. 26, 1930, pp. 41-43; MacMurphy, "Revolt in Connecticut," *The Nation*, Vol. 131, Sept. 10, 1930, pp. 263-64.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 88-89.
- ⁵ Griffin, "Roraback of Connecticut," *New Republic*, Vol. 65, Nov. 26, 1930, p. 41; Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 92-95; Duane Lockard, *New England State Politics* (Princeton, N. J., 1959), p. 248.
- ⁶ Wilbur Cross, *Connecticut Yankee, An Autobiography* (New Haven, Connecticut, 1943), p. 270; Message of the Governor, 1927 (Hartford, 1927), pp. 5-8, 1929 (Hartford, 1929), pp. 3-5.
- ⁷ Inaugural Messages of the Governors, 1923, 1925, 1927, and 1929; Special Message of Governor Trumbull, 1927; Bancroft, *Connecticut State Finances, 1862-1927*, pp. 64-74.
- ⁸ "Government in Business," *Connecticut Industry*, Vol. IV, March 26, 1941, p. 5, quoted in Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 86-87.
- ⁹ Annual Report of the President, Connecticut Chamber of Commerce (Hartford, 1923), p. 1, quoted in Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," p. 160.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 162.
- ¹¹ *Connecticut Industry*, Vol. IV, Jan. 26, 1941, cited in Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," p. 171.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 86-105, 161-72.
- ¹³ Bancroft, *Connecticut State Finances, 1862-1927*, pp. 52, 56, 108.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 70, 87, and Appendix, pp. 8-9; Report of the Comptroller (Hartford, 1930), p. 20.
- ¹⁵ Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 99-101.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 100; Report of the Comptroller, 1930, p. 21.
- ¹⁷ Report of the Department of Labor on the Conditions of Wage Earners in the State, 1924 (Hartford, 1924), p. 5, and 1926 (Hartford, 1926), p. 5.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1928, pp. 12-13.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 15.
- ²⁰ Fifteenth Census of the United States, Manufactures, 1929, Vol. III, p. 89.
- ²¹ Report of the Bureau of Labor, 1922 (Hartford, 1922), p. 6, 1924 (Hartford, 1924), p. 12, 1926 (Hartford, 1926), pp. 7-11, 1928 (Hartford, 1928), p. 12, 1930 (Hartford, 1930), p. 16.
- ²² Fifteenth Census of the United States, Manufactures, 1929, Vol. III, pp. 92-93; Report of the Department of Labor on Wages, etc., 1926, pp. 5-6, 1928, pp. 14-15.
- ²³ Fifteenth Census, Manufactures, 1929, Vol. III, pp. 90-91.
- ²⁴ Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," p. 53; Report of the Commission of Public Utilities, 1926 (Hartford, 1926), pp. 3-11.
- ²⁵ Report of the Bureau of Labor on the Conditions of the Wage Earners, 1928, pp. 18-19, 1926, pp. 7-15; Fifteenth Census, Manufactures, Vol. III, p. 93; Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," p. 55.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, Fifteenth Census, Manufactures, 1929, Vol. III, p. 17.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 93-95.
- ²⁸ Report of the Highway Commissioner, 1922 (Hartford, 1922), p. 15, 1923 (Hartford, 1923), pp. 13-14; 1924 (Hartford, 1924), p. 11; "The Connecticut Transportation Survey; Digest of the Report of a Survey of Transportation on the State Highway System of Connecticut," *Public Roads, A Journal of Highway Research*, Vol. VII, No. 6, August, 1926, p. 109; "The Narrative Report of the Connecticut State Highway Planning Survey," (Conn. State Highway Dept. in cooperation with the U. S. Public Roads Administration), (mimeographed), (1942), pp. 98-103; Public Roads

- Administration, "Highway Statistics; Summary to 1945," (Washington, 1947), pp. 44-46, 63.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19, "The Connecticut Transportation Survey," *Public Roads*, Vol. VII, No. 6, Aug. 1926, pp. 109, 115.
- ³⁰ Report of the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles (Hartford, 1930), p. 8; J. Gordon Mackay, "Connecticut Transportation Survey," *Public Roads*, Vol. 5, No. 1, March, 1924, p. 1; "The Connecticut Transportation System," *Public Roads*, Vol. 17, No. 6, p. 4115; "Highway Statistics," p. 19; Report of the Highway Commissioner, 1920 (Hartford, 1920), p. 15; Report of the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, 1922 (Hartford, 1922), pp. 15-16; *ibid.*, 1928, p. 9; Public Acts, 1921, p. 3350.
- ³¹ "Highway Statistics," p. 44.
- ³² *Bridgeport Post*, June 1, 1935.
- ³³ Report of the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, 1922, pp. 12-14; Report of the Highway Commissioner, 1922 (Hartford, 1922), pp. 16-21; *ibid.*, 1930 (Hartford, 1930), p. 11; Public Acts, 1925, p. 4098; *ibid.*, 1929, p. 4637.
- ³⁴ "The Narrative Report of the Connecticut State Highway Planning Survey," p. 103.
- ³⁵ Report of the Public Utilities Commissioner, 1924 (Hartford, 1924), p. 6; Report of the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, 1930 (Hartford, 1930), pp. 9-11; *ibid.*, 1928, p. 9.
- ³⁶ MacKay, "Connecticut Transportation Survey," pp. 4-17.
- ³⁷ Report of the Public Utilities Commission (Hartford, 1923), pp. 5-6.
- ³⁸ Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Railroads, Connecticut General Assembly (Hartford, 1923), pp. 1231-39; Report of the Joint New England Committee to the Governors of the New England States, Rehabilitation by Cooperation, a Railroad Policy for New England (Cambridge, Mass., 1923), pp. 250-51.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ In the period 1902-1913, the New Haven acquired control of the New England Railway, the Boston & Maine Railroad (which at the time controlled the Maine Central Railroad), and of the New York, Ontario, & Western; and partial control of the Rutland Railway. An agreement with the New York Central provided that the New Haven would share equally in the profits and losses of the Boston and Albany road. In addition to owning nearly all of the street and interurban railways in Rhode Island and Connecticut, the New Haven owned in Massachusetts the Worcester, Springfield, and Berkshire Street Railway systems and in New York a rapid transit line and two street railways. Also, three steamship lines were owned and were the Merchants & Miners Transportation Company, the Eastern Steamship Company, and the Hartford and New York Transportation Company. See *ibid.*, pp. 53-54.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 57-73.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 22-52.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 208-34.
- ⁴⁴ Report of the New England Transportation Committee to the Governors of the New England States (no place of publication, 1931), p. 56.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-56, 92-93.
- ⁴⁶ Report on Conditions of Wage Earners in the State (Hartford, 1920), pp. 18-19.
- ⁴⁷ Report of the Bureau of Labor, 1922 (Hartford, 1922), pp. 48-53; *ibid.*, 1925 (Hartford, 1925), pp. 52-56; *ibid.*, 1926 (Hartford, 1926), pp. 49-53; *ibid.*, 1929 (Hartford, 1929), pp. 51-54; *ibid.*, 1931 (Hartford, 1931), p. 67; Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 224-31.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 138-50, 174, 222.
- ⁴⁹ John Sinclair Ewing, "The History of Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Company, 1914-52," (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 1953), pp. 40-42; Report of the

- Department of Factory Inspection, 1922-31, *passim*; Report of the Industrial Investigator (Hartford, 1931), pp. 25-27; Fifteenth Census of the United States, Manufactures, 1929, III, pp. 90-91.
- ⁵⁰ Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 248-50.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 311-13; Report of the Department of Factory Inspection (Hartford, 1922), p. 10; Public Acts, 1921 (Hartford, 1921), pp. 3168, 3190; Public Acts, 1923 (Hartford, 1923), p. 3684; Public Acts, 1925 (Hartford, 1925), pp. 3930, 3932, 3933, 3997, 4071.
- ⁵² Report of the Bureau of Labor on the Conditions of Wage Earners, 1924 (Hartford, 1924), pp. 23-27; *ibid.*, 1925 (Hartford, 1925), pp. 68-71; Koenig, Immigrant Settlements, pp. 17-27; Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," p. 67.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 246-47.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 216.
- ⁵⁵ Reports of the Department of Factory Inspection, 1922-30 (Hartford, 1922-30), *passim*.
- ⁵⁶ Report of the Department of Labor on the Conditions of the Wage Earner, 1924, pp. 5-39.
- ⁵⁷ Report of the Board of Agriculture, 1920 (Hartford, 1920), pp. 17-18; *ibid.*, 1929 (Hartford, 1921), p. 19; *ibid.*, 1925 (Hartford, 1925), p. 164; Zumwalt, "Taxation, and Other Factors Affecting Private Forestry in Connecticut," p. 11.
- ⁵⁸ For the year ending June 30, 1930, the total value of dairy products was 22 million; of tobacco, 13; of poultry, 12; of fruit, three; of vegetables, 3.5; and of potatoes, 3.4 millions. Fifteenth Census of the United States, Agriculture, Vol. II, Pt. 1 (Washington, 1932), pp. 224-38; Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture, 1927 (Hartford, 1927), p. 7; *ibid.*, 1930 (Hartford, 1930), pp. 19-26.
- ⁵⁹ Fifteenth Census of the United States, Population, Vol. III, Pt. 1, p. 343; *ibid.*, Agriculture, Vol. II, Pt. 1, p. 224; Report of the Connecticut State Board of Agriculture, 1920 (Hartford, 1920), p. 49; Report of the Department of Agriculture, 1926 (Hartford, 1926), pp. 7-8; Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture, 1929 (Hartford, 1929), p. 19; *ibid.*, 1931 (Hartford, 1931), pp. 7-8.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 1926 (Hartford, 1926), p. 56; *ibid.*, 1927 (Hartford, 1927), p. 5; *ibid.*, 1929 (Hartford, 1929), pp. 13-18; *ibid.*, 1931 (Hartford, 1931), pp. 19-25; Fifteenth Census, Agriculture, Vol. II, pp. 23-95.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Manufactures, Vol. III, pp. 15, 89, 249.
- ⁶² Reports of the Bank Commissioners, 1921-29, *passim*.
- ⁶³ Report of the Tax Commissioner, 1929 and 1930 (Hartford, 1930).
- ⁶⁴ See above.
- ⁶⁵ Reports of the Bank Commissioners, 1923-29, *passim*.
- ⁶⁶ Report of the Bureau of Labor on the Conditions of Wage Earners, 1929 (Hartford, 1929), pp. 27-28, 67-68; *ibid.*, 1931 (Hartford, 1931), pp. 34-36.
- ⁶⁷ Fifteenth Census of the United States, Unemployment, Vol. I (Washington, 1931), pp. 191-94.
- ⁶⁸ Report of the Bureau of Labor, 1931 (Hartford, 1931), p. 5.
- ⁶⁹ Ewing, "History of the Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Company," p. 99.
- ⁷⁰ Report of the Industrial Investigator for 1929-30 (Hartford, 1930).
- ⁷¹ Report of the Connecticut Unemployment Commission, December, 1932 (No place of publ., n. d.), p. 7.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 171.
- ⁷³ Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, p. 220; Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 334-40; *The Nation*, Vol. 131, July 2, 1930, pp. 2-3; Allen B. MacMurphy, "Revolt in Connecticut," *The Nation*, Vol. 131, Sept. 10, 1930, p. 263; Griffin, "Roraback of Connecticut," pp. 41-42.
- ⁷⁴ Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, pp. 220-26; Eugene A. Davidson, "A Cross for Connecticut

Bossism; Portrait of a Professor Turned Politician," *Outlook and Independent*, Vol. 157, Jan. 14, 1931, pp. 62-64.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 64; Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, pp. 224-26.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ See above.

⁷⁸ Anti-Saloon League Yearbook, 1917 (Westerville, Ohio, no date), pp. 90-91; *ibid.*, 1920, pp. 14, 166; Ernest A. Grant, "The Traffic before the Eighteenth Amendment," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 163, Sept., 1932, p. 5; General Statutes, 1918.

⁷⁹ Constantine Panunzio, "The Foreign Born and Prohibition," *The Annals*, Vol. 163, Sept., 1932, p. 154.

⁸⁰ Irving Fisher, *The Noble Experiment* (New York, 1930), p. 224; Peter Odegar, *Pressure Politics, the Story of the Anti-Saloon League* (New York, 1928, p. 31; Ernest Gordon, *The Wrecking of the Eighteenth Amendment* (Francestown, New Hampshire, 1943), p. 1; Osterweis, *New Haven*, pp. 410-11.

⁸¹ Proceedings of the Convention called in accordance with the Proclamation of the Governor of the State of Connecticut, July, 1933, pp. 12-29; Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," p. 281; Inaugural Address of Charles A. Templeton (Hartford, Conn., 1923), pp. 7-8.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*; Message of the Governor, 1921 (Hartford, 1922), p. 18; *ibid.* (Hartford, 1925), p. 5.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 1921, p. 18.

⁸⁵ Public Acts, 1921, p. 3277; Anti-Saloon League Yearbook, 1920, p. 167; *ibid.*, 1923, p. 109; William G. Brown, "State Cooperation on Enforcement," *The Annals*, Vol. 163, Sept., 1932, pp. 7-8; Fisher, *The Noble Experiment*, pp. 227-28.

⁸⁶ Anti-Saloon League Yearbook, 1924, p. 85.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 1923, p. 108; *ibid.*, 1924, pp. 25-6, 85-6; *ibid.*, 1925, p. 80; *ibid.*, 1926, p. 76; Report of the State Police Department, 1921-22 (Hartford, 1922), p. 25; *ibid.*, 1922-23 (Hartford, 1925), p. 6; *ibid.*, 1923-24, p. 65; *ibid.*, 1926-27 (Hartford, 1929), p. 76; Report on the Enforcement of the Prohibition Laws of the United States, National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, Jan. 1931.

⁸⁹ "The Prohibition Situation," Department of Research and Education, Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, Research Bulletin No. 5; Frederick W. Brown, "Prohibition and Mental Hygiene, Effects on Mental Health, Specific Disorders," *The Annals*, Vol. 163, Sept., 1932, pp. 61-88; Haven Emerson, "Prohibition and Morbidity," in *ibid.*, pp. 52-60; Anti-Saloon League Yearbook, 1923, pp. 108-9; *ibid.*, 1924, pp. 85-6; Gordon, *The Wrecking of the Eighteenth Amendment*, p. 1.

⁹⁰ Fisher, *The Noble Experiment*, p. 226.

⁹¹ Report on the Enforcement of the Prohibition Laws, National Commission on Law Observance; Anti-Saloon League Yearbook, 1929, pp. 16, 92; *ibid.*, 1931, p. 49; J. H. Barnett, "College Seniors and the Liquor Problem," *The Annals*, Vol. 163, Sept. 1932, pp. 130-46; Public Acts, 1929, p. 4644.

⁹² Proceedings of the Convention Called in Accordance with the Proclamation of the Governor of the State of Connecticut, July, 1933, pp. 2-29.

⁹³ Preston William Slosson, *The Great Crusade and After, 1914-1928, A History of American Life*, Vol. 12, pp. 157-60; Osborn, "Political Progress," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, II, p. 40; Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Schuler, *Women Suffrage and Politics* (New York, 1926), pp. 391-401.

⁹⁴ Women were admitted to Wesleyan in 1872, to Hartford Theological Seminary in

- 1889, to Storrs in 1893, and to the Yale Graduate School in 1892. Phoebe A. Hanaford was named Chaplain of the House and Senate in 1870 and Mary Hall was admitted to the bar in 1882. See Osborn, "Political Progress," in Osborn, ed., *History of Connecticut*, II, pp. 36-40; Ida H. Harper, *History of the Woman Suffrage Movement* (New York, 1922) V, pp. 68-70, VI, pp. 72-73; Jackson, *Baldwin*, pp. 171-72.
- ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*; Report on the Conditions of the Wage Earner in the State, 1929 (Hartford, 1929), pp. 40-42, 62.
- ⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 40-43.
- ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 40; *ibid.*, 1931, p. 46.
- ⁹⁸ Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," p. 202.
- ⁹⁹ Public Acts, 1919, p. 2844; *ibid.*, 1925, pp. 3930, 3932, 3933, 3997.
- ¹⁰¹ Historical Files, Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut, New Haven; Hartford *Courant*, Feb. 12, 1923.
- ¹⁰² *Ibid.*, Historical Files, Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut, New Haven.
- ¹⁰³ Report on the Condition of the Wage Earner in the State, 1925 (Hartford, 1925), pp. 75-8; *ibid.*, 1929, pp. 83-5; *ibid.*, 1926 (Hartford, 1926), pp. 55-58.
- ¹⁰⁴ Report of the State Board of Fisheries and Game, 1926 (Hartford, 1926), pp. 7-8; *ibid.*, 1928 (Hartford, 1928), p. 11; *ibid.*, 1930, p. 39; Report of the Park and Forest Commission, 1930 (Hartford, 1930), pp. 22-32; Report on Forests and Wildlife, 1930 (Hartford, 1930), pp. 7-11.
- ¹⁰⁵ Report on the Condition of the Wage Earner, 1929 (Hartford, 1929), p. 24.
- ¹⁰⁶ Capen, "The History of Connecticut Institutions," pp. 427-29, 440-51.
- ¹⁰⁷ Report of the State Department of Public Welfare, 1931 (Hartford, 1931), pp. 9-13.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14; Capen, "History of Connecticut Institutions," pp. 430-39.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 444.
- ¹¹⁰ Report of the Department of Welfare, 1931, pp. 16-18.

Chapter XXXII

The New Deal in Connecticut

DURING the first fifteen months of the depression, the responsibility for providing relief continued to remain with the towns. Despite the mounting problems, made more severe by the growing numbers of the unemployed and the mobile and transient nature of the population, the towns chose to maintain their historic independence.¹ "Nothing would have been gained . . .," it was held, "by a departure from a principle deep-rooted in habits of past generations."² Connecticut shared the hope of the rest of the country that the depression was temporary and relied upon the usual agencies to provide relief. New Haven registered its unemployed in the Fall of 1930, Waterbury established a Mutual Aid Unemployment Fund to which employees contributed a share of their wages to care for the unemployed, and other cities and towns increased their expenditures for direct relief. The amount expended for outdoor relief had increased from \$878,430 in 1929 to \$1,272,220 by 1930, 70 percent of which was spent by the 26 most urban towns.³ By the end of the year, there were 36 communities which had established special commissions for the relief of the unemployed.⁴

"A crisis justified unusual action," asserted Cross in his inaugural address and he called for Connecticut to depart "from the traditional functions of government" and to provide the monies and the authority necessary to alleviate the distress. He asked for the work of the Committee on Unemployment, an emergency appropriation for the Department of Parks and Forests "to provide further winter work for the unemployed,"—funds for a comprehensive building program to begin at once, and \$31,000,000 for the Highway Department to be used for the

building of the Merritt Boulevard in Fairfield and for the improvement of the rural roads. Under a suspension of the rules, the Assembly voted an emergency appropriation of \$10,000 for a study of the employment situation and \$100,000 for the parks and forests. In addition, it appropriated \$3,000,000 for the improvement of the rural roads, \$1,000,000 to forward the work on the "Merritt Boulevard," and authorized the use of a treasury surplus of about \$8,000,000 for a public buildings program. It refused to vote \$100,000 for continuing the work in the parks and forests during the next winter on the grounds that such action would have a bad psychological effect upon the State because of the inference that "in the opinion of the Legislature the industrial depression might last another year."⁵ The Connecticut Unemployment Commission was the successor to the Connecticut State Emergency Committee on Unemployment and was appointed by Governor Trumbull in consultation with Cross in December, 1930 to study the unemployment in the state.⁶

An effort was made to spread available work to tide laborers over and, hopefully, to enable industry to hold its labor supply until full production was resumed. The Manufacturers' Association of Hartford reported in 1931 that 81 factories employing 36,250 persons had 8,873 persons on the payroll in excess of their production demands. As stocks were inevitably built up in this process and had to be disposed of below market prices, the realities of the depression bore in on the consciousness of Connecticut industry. The plan, no doubt, was of benefit to individuals in the early months of the depression, but it did not increase the total amount of work, and frequently the work was spread to the extent that it was necessary for laborers to seek relief to supplement their reduced wage.⁷ The depressed industrial condition of the state was a reality, not an illusion. The *Hartford Courant* quoted the Department of Commerce to the effect that the value of the total product of the state in 1932 was only slightly more than 70 percent of its value in 1929. More than 1000 firms went into bankruptcy in 1932 with liabilities of more than twice their assets. New businesses, with a capitalization of \$50,000,000 offset the loss to some extent, and some industries avoided liquidation through loans from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The bankruptcies cut deeply into the confidence of the

state and any hope that industry was experiencing only a temporary slump was dispelled.⁸

The continued failures of banks further emphasized the severity of the depression, and the closing of the savings accounts emphasized



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NEW LONDON HARBOR LIGHT (1935 PHOTO)

the impact of the economic decline on the individual citizen. The Citizens Bank and Trust Company of New Haven and the Commercial Trust Company of New Britain failed in December, 1930. By Fall of 1932, 15 State banks, two private banks, and one industrial bank had failed with the greatest number of these failures occurring in the fall and winter of 1931 and 1932.⁹ Three additional State Banks failed in 1933, and two of the earlier failures were absorbed by other banks. By 1934, there were 16 banks still in the process of liquidation with liabil-

ities of \$67,000,000 against \$60,000,000 in appraised assets. Nine others were absorbed by other banks, and still others decreased their capital stock.¹⁰ By 1932, also, Connecticut residents were evidently calling upon the last of their resources. Only in 1931 and 1932 did the number of savings accounts closed in the state banks exceed the number of new accounts. One hundred and three thousand accounts were closed in 1931 and 183,763 in 1932. For every new account opened in the latter year, more than four were closed. The Savings Banks remained more stable, none of them discontinuing business. In 1932, however, for the only time in recent years the total amount of their deposits declined. The fact that more accounts were closed during this year than were opened suggests that the effects of the panic were being directly felt by a larger segment of the population.¹¹

The problem of relief was accentuated by the fact that it bore unevenly on the different segments of the population and was concentrated in the cities. The Manufacturers' Associations of Hartford County, New Haven, and Bridgeport revealed that more than 40 percent of the potential work force in their respective areas were without jobs. The Russell Sage Foundation in two separate studies, one in 1931 and the other two years later, indicated that the unemployed of New Haven had almost doubled in the two year period. Of even more importance was the fact that the total man hours worked in 1932 was only 30 percent of the total man hours worked in 1929.¹² On the other hand, the rural areas were comparatively unaffected. The Relief Commission reported in 1932 that 50 of the 169 towns had no relief problem. The number of unemployed in the rural industrial areas was frequently greater than in the more urban areas because of the lack of industrial diversification. However, the rural nature of these areas enabled the inhabitants to secure more easily the necessities of life and lessened the impact of the depression upon them.¹³ While there were relatively few white collar workers unemployed, the difficulties of supplying work for them and their difficulty in adapting to a different type of work made assistance to them more difficult. As unemployment increased, opinion discouraged the employment of the married women and an effort was made to place men in the available jobs. A contrasting force was the need of industry to reduce the costs of production and the lower wage

scale which prevailed for women increased their opportunities of employment, but unhappily reduced the total fund of wages. Significantly fewer women than men lost their jobs in the factories and increasing numbers of women were employed in the social and educa-



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tional services. Of the total work force, a greater number of those employed in the factories of the state lost their jobs than those engaged in other occupations. Unemployment was likewise heavy in the transportation and communication fields and in the mercantile trades. Since these occupations were concentrated in the cities, the problems of relief were infinitely greater in the urban areas.¹⁴

There is "no satisfactory measure of the number of unemployed," wrote the Relief Commission in 1934. "We are to a great extent ignor-

ant of the magnitude of the problem which we are asked to solve." Succeeding generations have remained similarly ignorant, but there is enough information to indicate that unemployment was settling upon Connecticut society. The United States Bureau of Census in 1930 reported that 50,890 or 7.5 percent of those normally gainfully employed were out of work. In the spring of 1932 it was reported that there were 150,000, or about 21 percent, unemployed in the state. Margaret Hogg, in a careful statistical analysis, held that 26 percent was a more realistic estimate, and a similar study of unemployment in Meriden confirmed the conclusion. A factory-employment index, prepared by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, revealed that industrial employment fell steadily from 1929 through 1931, reaching a low point of 54 percent of the 1929 average in the Fall of 1932. At the same time, in a special report to the Governor, it was estimated that there was a decrease in employment of 37 percent, and a decrease in payrolls of 40 percent. Two out of every five workers, then, were without jobs, and the proportion in the urban industrial centers was even higher.¹⁵

The unemployment conditions were made worse as a result of ineffective labor legislation. Connecticut was "not exactly a worker's paradise," concluded William Bilevitz, who added that the Manufacturers' Association had seen to that.¹⁶ For years wages had been low, unions depressed, and labor legislation discouraged. When W. J. Fitzgerald assumed the post of Deputy Commissioner of Factory Inspection, in 1931, he failed to find records of any prosecutions for violations of the labor laws within recent years. Employers expressed such ignorance of the laws that it seemed reasonable to him to spend the first year warning them that thereafter the laws would be enforced. Even so it was necessary in the first year of his administration to prosecute one foreman who was charging workers for their jobs and eight others for flagrant violations of the laws governing working conditions for minors and hours of employment of women and children. The labor laws of Connecticut, in the Commissioner's view, were below the standards of those in force in many of the states.¹⁷

The widespread unemployment made the eradication of undesirable labor practices more difficult. One of the most ironical practices in view of the general economic condition was that of withholding of wages.

Some employers engaged in the practice because of their own financial difficulties. Others, however, simply took advantage of the "necessitous conditions of the wage earner." The ridiculous was reached when six contractors for state aid roads withheld wages from employees on projects intended in part at least to alleviate the unemployment.¹⁸ The most shocking of the labor conditions were those in the needle trade industry. To escape the high wages demanded by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and United Neckwear unions of New York City the industry in the latter part of the nineteen twenties invaded Connecticut and centered in New Haven where they had the benefit of an open shop and the encouragement of the Chamber of Commerce and the Connecticut Manufacturers' Association. At the request of the Commissioner of Labor, the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor studied the situation and reported a wide variance of wages among all classes of the employees (including, in some instances, no wages at all for the so-called learner), irregular, and short terms of employment, and abominable health conditions. In some instances garments were taken home where the employee and other members of her family would work long hours for little pay. Such conditions were accompanied by labor strife which aroused the attention of the populace. Many of the established manufacturers understood the inevitably depressing effect of such practices on the general economic situation, but an official of the New Haven Chamber of Commerce defended the practice as a necessary evil without which there would be a great deal more unemployment. "The garment shops," he said, "were complementing charity and for this reason must be tolerated."¹⁹

Meanwhile, the financial inabilities of the municipalities to meet the mounting problems of relief resulted in their demanding that the state assume a greater responsibility. The difficulties in the Winter of 1931-32 were lessened somewhat by the distribution of surplus army clothing, but by Spring the cities were facing huge deficits. The Connecticut Unemployment Commission advised the Governor that 26 towns, including 69 percent of the population, anticipated a deficit of \$5,483,653. The needs of some cities were rapidly altering the idea of the independence of the towns. Municipal officials in April requested the Governor to call a special session of the Assembly to consider the

problems of relief. Governor Cross appears to have hesitated to call a special session and time was gained by the appointment of another committee, one to report especially to the Governor, which was headed by Angus Thorne, Superintendent of Bridgeport's Department of Public Welfare, and was instructed to survey relief needs. The Committee reported on October 11 that the "towns would require state or federal aid after January 1, 1933."²⁰ A special session had been avoided. The inconvenience of a special session during an election year was thus avoided.

In 1932, both parties were torn by factional strife. Albert Levitt had combined the prohibition zealots and the anti-Roraback forces to form the Independent Republican Party in his effort to wrest control of the Party from the "Kaiser of Connecticut."²¹ The regular wing of the party could do no better than to nominate one who symbolized the "era of prosperity," John H. Trumbull. The bitter wrangling among the "old guards" and the "new guards" of the Democratic party continued in the selection of the delegates to the national convention, in the choice of the national committee woman, and in the nomination of the state ticket. Cross manipulated a state ticket of his choice, with himself as the head and Thomas Hewes as the nominee for Lieutenant Governor, over the bitter objection of the "old guard," who supported the incumbent Daniel J. Leary.²² There was no great clamor in the campaign of 1932 that the unemployed be aided. The Democrats, in their platform, called for direct aid to the distressed areas, which included a sales tax for unemployment relief, and old age pensions, but after announcing this progressive program Cross made Roraback and machine politics the point of his attack. The Republicans, somewhat in the spirit of the national campaign, pointed to their record and their "pay as you go" policy.²³

An unknown factor was the Socialist Party, which a national magazine prophesied would attract a large number of urban voters in protest against the failure of either party to do anything for the unemployed. It was "plain nonsense," it was reported, "to assume that the unemployed workers were going to forgive and forget."²⁴ Connecticut's political democracy again befuddled the observers. The more than 20,000 votes for Norman Thomas represented a significant gain for the Socialists,



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

COLCHESTER

but it hardly represented a protest. The majority of the electorate cast its vote for Hoover for President, but returned Cross as Governor. The Republicans retained their stranglehold on the House, but the Democrats, for the first time since 1913, held a majority in the Senate by one vote. One analyst explained the failure of a larger protest vote for the Socialist Party by suggesting that it seemed only "a remote means of urgent change."²⁵ It seems possible, however, that there was no great urgency felt for change.

Governor Cross in his inaugural did not issue an urgent call for aid for relief. To meet what he identified "as the most critical era of our history," the most that he would recommend were further controls of the banks, changes in the charters of the municipal governments to enable them to save interest on short term notes, and a revision of the statutes to permit the cities to borrow beyond the statutory limitation of five percent of the grand list. He warned, however, that if the state loaned money it would have to exercise greater supervisory control. He passed along without comment a recommendation of the Tax Commissioner "that the state might guarantee, under certain conditions, bonds issued by the municipalities to meet actual emergencies." He treated similarly a recommendation of the Unemployment Commission that "the State lay a special emergency tax for relief of municipalities." Although he reported on the improved roads and parks, significantly he did not relate them to unemployment relief. In fact, the Bureau of the Budget concluded that "any such program affords but little unemployment relief and has no marked effect on business conditions." The state faced a deficit of from 14 to 16 million dollars and the Board of Finance and Control believed it better policy "to retrench, economize, and balance the state budget," for programs "designed mainly as a palliative to existing conditions are much better left with the people who are called upon also to support local government." The Board of Finance urged that unemployment expenditures be eliminated from the state budget and that any monies supplied for relief be identified as such.²⁶

Cross, in retrospect, wrote that a program of direct relief "was not in immediate sight. Nothing more could be expected from legislation than wider leeway for municipalities to issue bonds." Such political

realism, it should be noted, did not deter the Governor from pushing hard for his "five point program," which included such immediately unrealizable proposals as a district court system and that a two-thirds majority in both houses be required to override a Governor's veto. This inconsistency casts doubt on his subsequent explanation for not recommending specific action and lends credence that he spoke as he believed when he warned the public not to look upon government "as a magic wand, which can be expected to bring fabulous aid to those who cannot aid themselves," and asked in conclusion only that the people would "supply through taxes and likewise through all possible charitable goods, the funds essential to maintain the standards of our community life."²⁷

Municipal leaders rose in protest against the Governor's conservative proposals. The deficit of the municipalities for relief had mounted to \$13,000,000. It was indicated that appeals to the constituency were no longer sufficient; instead, it was time for action. The Connecticut League of Municipalities proposed first a luxury tax, and later a sales tax, as a means of securing the badly needed monies for relief. A Mayors' Committee proposed a 25 million dollar bond issue to assist the cities. The Secretary of the Hartford Community Chest proposed that the state assume 40 percent of the relief costs of the cities. Hunger marchers, led by the Communists, descended upon the Capitol and demanded that the Assembly appropriate \$10,000,000 for the relief of the unemployed, eliminate the appropriation to the militia, and cut the salaries of the state employees. The Governor received a committee of the marchers and "held out hopes to them for help either from the State or the Federal Government," and "they left in good cheer." In the absence of any concrete assistance from the State, many of the Connecticut towns inaugurated public works programs in an effort to materially aid the workers and to preserve their morale.²⁸

In "this most critical era" the politicians seemed most concerned with translating their political power into appointments and a liquor control system that would secure political position. The majority of one in the Senate gave the Governor the opportunity, through his appointive power, to strengthen his position and that of his Party. A storm broke, however, when Cross learned that three Democratic Old Guard Sen-

ators had collaborated with the Republican leadership in deciding the court appointments of Hartford and the vicinity. Cross had to content himself with castigating the politicians in a press conference, for the Assembly approved the slate by joint resolution. Party strife reached a boiling point over the proposed method of controlling the sale and distribution of intoxicating beverages. The Governor, anticipating the repeal of prohibition, appointed a special commission to recommend a plan. It called for the sale of beer in taverns, of liquor in the drug stores, and for the centralization of control in the state under the administration of a bipartisan commission of three. Cross allegedly heard rumors of a proposal, which he attributed to the Republicans, that would have placed the control of beer, as in pre-prohibition days, under the County Commissioner. Cross appealed by radio to the citizenry to assist him "to win the battle against the relentless opposition of politicians who put patronage above the public welfare". Cross charged that the subsequent proposals framed by the Republicans in "secret conclave" would have enabled anyone who had \$25 to receive a permit. Raymond Baldwin, one of the architects of the Republican position, denied that his party favored the county plan and sought to dismiss the issue as "just a case of who could shout the loudest." It may be conjectured whether as the law has been administered political considerations have been greater under centralized control than they would have been under local administration, but, in 1933, it was the latter which the Connecticut public believed portended the greatest danger. There was an outpouring of indignation in opposition to the Republican position and in support of the Governor. On April 18, after an acrimonious four-hour debate, the plan for centralized control was approved in the House and two days later in the Senate. On the last day of the session the parties stopped their political maneuvering and amended imperfections in the bill.²⁹ While this issue was resolved, legislation for the unemployed languished.

During the first hundred days of Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration, public questions, which hitherto had been regarded as the province of the state, became of national concern. In Connecticut, the banking laws of the state had been revised in 1931 and additional controls had been recommended by Governor Cross in his Inaugural. When

the Banking Holiday was declared by Roosevelt in March, 1933, the parties joined in bi-partisan support of legislation granting the Governor the power to implement the federal provision in Connecticut, increasing the power of the Bank Commissioner, doubling the amount of capital stock required of commercial banks, standardizing deposit and withdrawal notices and providing a basis for mergers and consolidation and for a system of branch banking. Of greatest concern was the payment of claims by the insurance companies during the period of the banking holiday. The legislature gave to the Banking Commissioner, under the direction of the Governor, almost dictatorial powers over the insurance companies for this period. Banking practices were stabilized as legislative provisions became a permanent part of the banking laws of the state.³⁰

The impetus for relief for the hard-pressed towns came from the Federal Government. The State was one of six which by June 1933 had not taken advantage of the Federal Government's emergency relief construction funds by which loans were made available to those states which had exhausted their resources. Although these debts were later cancelled, at the time the proviso that they would be repaid by monies withheld from Federal Highway Aid made them unattractive to Connecticut. This may have been a greater deterrent than the historic policy of independence which the commission considered an explanation. The new jobs which would be created by a state-supported and administered relief program was of potentially great political advantage to the one who held appointive power. As the parties jockeyed for position, the Federal Emergency Relief Act was passed and provided \$500,000,000 for outright grants to the states. The principle of independence no longer impeded the state from taking advantage of aid. The state guaranteed the payment of municipal bonds issued for the purpose of unemployment relief. The Municipal Finance and Unemployment Relief Commission was created as the administrative agency in control of municipal finances and to serve as the agency for the administration and distribution of funds received from the Federal Government. Through funds supplied by the Federal Government and in accord with the policies entailed thereby³¹ municipal relief was placed under the supervision of the State.

Any theoretical tenets of local responsibility vanished as unemployment increased and as tangible relief through the assistance of the Federal Government became a reality. When the plans for the Civilian Conservation Corps became known the *Hartford Courant* endorsed it as "an essential step in the emergency," but held that the Government should do nothing which would delay balancing the budget.³² Mobilization of recruits was begun April 6, and by June 19, it was reported that practically all of the C.C.C. groups were in the field.³³ By March, 1937, 21 civilian conservation camps had been established in Connecticut.³⁴ The camps were not without their problems, as shown by the conflict of the corps and the youths of Thomaston in the Summer of 1933, but in retrospect there is no doubt that the contributions of the corps were impressive. By December 31, 1936, \$4,671,000 had been returned to dependents of the enrollees. There seems merit in the view of the Relief Commission, however, that the contributions of the corps "can never be computed in terms of dollars." It "had succeeded in reconditioning . . . , men who had suffered peculiarly, not from the loss of employment, but in many cases from never having had employment at all."³⁵ As the winter of 1933-34 approached, news was received that "much of the oversupply of important food stuffs and staples were to be placed in the hands of the destitute unemployed who were living on the short shrift of public unemployment relief."³⁶ State officials overlooked the barb and accepted the produce. Physical facilities were established for food which was distributed by local relief agencies on the basis of an investigation by social workers where possible or by those trained under the supervision of the Commission. By the next summer, products valued at more than three quarters of a million dollars had been distributed to Connecticut citizens; and, by the end of 1936, a total of more than 92,000,000 pounds of products.³⁷ Concurrently, shelters, camps, and farms were established for transients. In all, nine such centers were established. A measure of the contribution of the program is revealed in the monthly average that from 1,200 to 1,300 persons were here provided for in 1934 and 1935.³⁸

Efforts to relieve human misery were combined with the objective of providing regular employment on public works for those who were willing and able to work. This was done through the Civil Works Ad-

ministration and its successor, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. The emphasis was on need and the imperfections of the program of the CWA were compensated for somewhat by the speed with which the projects were begun. In four months and 21 days, 972 projects had been activated; 45,000 men had gone to work; and over \$11,500,000 had been expended, \$10,000,000 of which had been provided by the Federal Government. The emphasis on the use of unskilled labor encouraged waste and was prejudicial to the skilled worker. The program was disproportionately favorable to the residents of the smaller towns, practically 100 percent of their labor force being absorbed, in contrast to the provision of work for only one in five of the unemployed in the larger cities. A note of approval was voiced by state relief officials when the Civil Works Administration was terminated and its functions taken over by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, primarily, it seems, because the Federal Government had skirted the state's relief officials and had aroused latent fears of the lessening of state independence. The works program was greatly expanded after April 1, 1934. Despite limiting the program to the 70 towns in greatest need, over 2,700 projects were begun under FERA. As the state took a more active part in the administration of the program during this period, charges and counter charges were exchanged between the local, state, and federal officials. Accusations of political pressure and favoritism in the approval of projects, the granting of contracts, the appointment of supervisors, and in the hiring of labor were made against each echelon of officials.³⁹

The works program authority was again transferred on December 31, 1935, this time to the Works Progress Administration. The greater degree of Federal control exercised under the Works Progress Administration did not deter Connecticut from securing additional monies from Washington. Although Harry Hopkins, in March 1935, called upon Connecticut to assume a greater proportion than the 34 percent of the total which she was then contributing toward relief, she in fact provided an even smaller share under the WPA. Of the 50 million dollars expended by June 1937, Connecticut had contributed only 17.6 percent of the funds. The 2,500 projects varied widely, but approximately one-third of the total amount was spent for streets and roads,

and another seven and one-half million for sewer improvements. There were among the projects those frequently the brunt of jests, but appreciated by the beneficiaries as in the case of the eleven paintings by well-known artists received by the State Library. James Brewster, the Librarian, candidly stated these could not have been acquired out of regular appropriations. As economic conditions gradually improved the need for relief lessened only to mount again with the recession of 1937. Work relief continued in Connecticut until the very eve of World War II, the greater part, however, being partial rather than full relief. In the later years the numbers of projects ranged from 1,000 to 3,000, and by March 1941, there were fewer than 500.⁴⁰

The business-minded Yankee judged work relief vastly superior to direct relief if the projects were carefully screened; otherwise, work relief was considered too expensive. Mayor Spellacy of Hartford was convinced that Hartford could do more with \$1,000,000 of its own money than with \$5,000,000 of federal funds. It seemed difficult for the Yankee to value a project as relief apart from judging it by its end product. To an extent the Federal government moved toward this position as it changed to an emphasis on useful public works.⁴¹

When inaugurated, relief programs were intended to effect recovery on the premise that "industry could not be stimulated solely by slogans of confidence." The projects undertaken under the aegis of the Public Works Administration inaugurated in June, 1933, as a part of the National Industrial Recovery Administration, included the improvement and construction of non-federal installations as well as those owned by the federal government. Although the facilities of the federal prison at Danbury were improved under the PWA, programs in Connecticut were almost entirely those wherein monies provided by the Federal government were used to assist the state and local communities in the construction of public works. They included repairs to school buildings, libraries, town halls, and fire houses. Among the larger projects were the construction of Kenney Park Club House in Hartford, a sewage disposal plant in Putnam, and an athletic field in Shelton. Also, a grant of \$2,576,000 was made to the Mansfield Training School, and monies were provided for the improvement of the New Haven Railroad.

Due to the lack of previous planning, to financial difficulties, and to administrative controls, projects under the non-federal grants were slow to start. Connecticut seems to have done better, however, than the country as a whole in the completion of projects. Eighty percent of the



(Courtesy Conn. State Lib.)

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261 projects begun had been completed by June, 1939, which was 15 percent more than the average for the country as a whole. There remains a wide difference of opinion as to the effectiveness of the WPA either as an agent of relief or recovery. Its effect on the Connecticut economy must not be judged solely, however, by the number of projects, the men employed, or the \$28,000,000 the Federal Government poured into the state. An indeterminable amount of indirect benefits accrued to the state as orders poured in for the hardware, copper prod-

ucts, and electrical supplies needed for the completion of WPA projects in other regions. Shortly after the administration was transferred to the Federal Works Agency in June, 1939, Connecticut industry once again turned to producing the materials of war.⁴²

The NIRA was of greatest significance, perhaps, as a symbol and force for change exerting a pressure on social legislation and exercising regulatory functions. At this the time when the importance of increasing the purchasing power of the consumer as a first step in recovery was being stressed in Washington, legislation introduced in the 1933 session of the General Assembly to establish a minimum wage for women and children was held in the Labor Committee. Franklin D. Roosevelt, in a telegram to Cross, as to 11 other Governors, expressed his interest in the state's passing minimum wage laws. The Assembly responded with half a loaf. The legislation was passed, but monies were not supplied for its effective enforcement. The principle of a minimum wage for certain elements of the state's population, however, had been established. In subsequent weeks, NRA codes went into effect and increases in wages and reductions in hours were noticeable. This was due in part, too, to the effective bargaining of labor with management. The state Board of Arbitration and Mediation, created in 1895, had "never functioned with any success," it was said. Appointments to it had been discontinued for some time, when they were resumed by Cross in 1931. After the right of collective bargaining was strengthened by the NRA, a state Labor Relations Board was established at the request of both labor and management. The Labor Commissioner was to act as arbitrator in the first instance in all labor disputes in the state. Within the first five months of operation, 31 strikes were adjusted satisfactorily, and 34 were referred to the regional board of operation.

The famed Blue Eagle did not settle over Connecticut without protest. Some employers refused to submit their disputes to arbitration; others, after apparently reaching agreement, refused to take back the employees involved and, to avoid the charge of discrimination, dismissed some non-union members. Such resistance aroused the ire of General Hugh Johnson, the Federal Administrator, and caused sharp exchanges between him and the Governor. As a result of impetus from Washington, the State's employment service was completely reorganized.

The state legislature, in 1933, anticipating the passage of the Wagner Peyser Act, approved the state's entering into an agreement with the Federal Government. This was formally accomplished in November. According to the NRA, all jobs on public works were to be secured



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

WATERBURY

through the state employment offices. Through a federal grant, extra personnel was appointed in each of the six state offices, their personnel was selected by the merit system, new locations were procured, and the methods and procedures of the offices were revised.

The regulations imposed by NRA corrected some of the worst of the existent labor conditions. The public had been shocked at the conditions found to exist in the dress industry and the legislature had responded with regulations requiring the registration of new em-

ployees, prohibiting locked doors on industrial establishments during working hours, providing for weekly payment of wages, and demanding work certificates for minors under 18 years of age. Further regulations under NRA "altered the situation so markedly" that within two years the dress industry was no longer considered a sweated industry.⁴³

In the campaign of 1934, above the strident clamor of the office seekers, a recognition of issues was voiced. The Democratic program of reform was submitted amidst Republican warnings of the menace of Washington to Connecticut life and institutions. The *Courant* reminded its readers, "This is 1934," and that the policies at Washington and Hartford "are undergoing an examination that is by no means as comforting as our Democratic friends like to assume." There were, however, sufficient professions of commitment to legislative reforms in both the platforms to "impress" a national liberal magazine with the "extraordinary program" being advocated by men who could not by the greatest imagination be branded as Reds. The struggles within the parties, however, remained the same. Cross was, again, forced to beat back the "old guard" to secure the nomination of a ticket of his choice. The Republicans brushed aside Levitt's query, "Who owns Connecticut?" and nominated as their candidate the courageous and hard-hitting attorney of Hartford County, Hugh M. Alcorn.⁴⁴

Throughout the campaign there were reverberations of the labor incident which had impelled the Republican Lieutenant Governor, Roy C. Wilcox, to call out the National Guard to quell the most serious of the textile strikes which occurred at Danielson and Putnam in the Fall of 1934 when Cross was out of the state. Labor understood the advantage offered by compulsory arbitration and increasingly utilized the strike as a means of securing wage demands and of eliminating the "stretch-out" system. The disturbances at Danielson and Putnam had been made more severe by "flying squadrons" of organizers. Eventual successful mediation by the Commissioner of Labor, Joseph M. Tone, did not erase bitterness. When the Republican candidate declared that the New Deal was making "mendicants and beggars" of the people, he made what Cross regarded as the fatal error of the campaign with this "cruel insult to a hundred thousand workers in the state who had lost their jobs." Cross, for his part, found the old charge that the Repub-

lican candidate would merely be a front for those behind the scenes less effective than before, and he drew a stinging rebuke from the *Courant* for thus challenging the independence of Alcorn. Cross had the tremendous advantage, despite his own lack of boldness, of the programs for the unemployed initiated by the Federal Government. He mollified the cities by blaming the Assembly for the failure to come to their assistance. The electorate expressed its confidence in the state's participation in the federal programs by electing a Democratic Senator and four Democratic Congressmen as representatives in Washington and by electing Democrats to all of the state offices. The House remained Republican, but a new balance of power appeared in the Senate in the three Socialists, who, as a block, could be decisive on any straight party issue, inasmuch as there were 17 Democrats and 15 Republicans.⁴⁵

After his reelection, when Wilbur Cross addressed the General Assembly in 1933, he sounded like a New Deal Democrat. In the continuing "period of storm and stress" there remained no question in his mind of the part the Federal Government should play in the relief of the unemployed or in stimulating recovery. He was lavish in his praise of the beneficences Connecticut had received and urged that the Assembly pass the legislation necessary for the state to take further advantage of Federal aid. To provide the necessary matching funds he now suggested that six million dollars be diverted temporarily from the highway income and asserted in support that for a state to spend nearly as much on highway construction as on all other phases of the government was "not a good distribution of income." He recommended that the emergency legislation, such as that concerning banks, become permanent. In the field of welfare, the change in his position since 1933 was almost revolutionary. "The time had come," he stated, "for the state to assume a large part of the cost of relief which has been borne by the municipalities." To give emphasis to this idea, he pointed to the report of the Special Tax commission, which recommended that "an appropriation be made by the State from its general fund for expenditures for local outdoor charitable relief." In a similar vein, he submitted that in order for all children to have an equal opportunity for acquiring an education it was "necessary for the state to assume a larger share than it is now doing in the total cost of public education." The institutional

building program which had been delayed for want of funds was to be resumed. The completion of Fairfield Hospital was of utmost urgency and the provision of a new training school for the imbecile and a veterans' home of almost equal importance. To finance this and other programs, Cross advocated the introduction of a two percent sales tax and a five percent tax on the interest and dividends received by the citizens of the state. He repeated his request for stricter control of the public utilities, and asked for additional controls of the milk industry and for a clarification of the liquor laws. To further the position of the workingman, he recommended a 40 hour week regardless of age or sex; the regulation of private employment agencies; and the appointment of a commission to study unemployment insurance. A more careful study of the man and the times will be necessary to determine whether he was a liberal at heart, but political realist enough to know that in Connecticut, particularly as a Democrat, he must make haste slowly if he wished to be returned for another term; or, whether, in spite of his urbanity, he was provincial in his political philosophy, but was swooped up by the energy of the New Deal and carried as a leader of liberal reform.⁴⁶

In the structure and operation of government, Cross outlined a political philosophy that has characterized his party to the present time. He believed or he came to believe that the ultimate responsibility for the affairs of state rested with the Executive. A step had been taken in this direction in his first administration by extending the appointive power of the Governor to the Courts of Common Pleas. In 1935, with an appeal to take the courts out of politics, he urged that judges of town, city, borough, and police courts be appointed by the Governor. It is obvious that this would have transferred, rather than have eliminated, patronage, and that its merits would rest upon evaluations of the appointive authority. He joined with the Judicial Council in looking forward to the time when all courts would be brought under the Supreme Court of Errors. To increase the power of the Executive, he repeated his request that a two-thirds majority of both houses be required to override a Governor's veto. To promote efficiency in government, he requested that a comprehensive survey be made of the business of the State with a view toward the reorganization of government.⁴⁷

The business of politics in the Assembly had already begun. Cross, it was assumed, was in a weaker position because his plurality of 8,599 (the result, the Governor believed, of the 38,000 votes cast for Jasper McLevy), was not only less than in previous elections, but was less than



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

WILLIMANTIC

the margin of victory held by the rest of the State ticket. A fight erupted over the organization of the Senate where neither of the major parties had a majority, and the balance of power was held by the Socialists.⁴⁸ After 109 efforts to organize the Senate, the Socialists threw their votes to the Republicans. To the cry of "deal," Jasper McLevy replied that the Socialists had "thrown responsibility to the Republican Party for real progressive legislation."⁴⁹ The factional fight among the "Old and New Guard," it was suggested, made an arrangement with the Demo-

crats impossible, but, in fact, the Socialists followed a course outlined by Bridgeport *Times Star* as "Play with the Roraback machine, give the machine control of the State Senate in return for . . . legislation for Bridgeport."⁵⁰ Bridgeport was rewarded by the state's assuming the cost of bridges which bore heavily on the city's treasury, removing the receivership into which the city had gone as result of exceeding its capacity to borrow, and establishing a Civil Service System.

As the Assembly turned to the business of legislation it resumed its traditional state's rights position in opposition to New Deal measures. To alleviate the problems of relief in the cities, an attempt was made through Federal financing to encourage the rehabilitation of rural areas. Cross proposed the establishment of a Connecticut Rehabilitation Corporation. Protests arose from the tenement house owners who feared the loss of rents, from the Grange which feared the production of surplus products, and from the Socialists who branded the program as discriminatory in that it would benefit only about 250 families. The opposition was sufficient for the Republicans to make it a political issue. Herman Kopplemann of the First District added fire to the discussion, in what was an unusual action for a United States Congressman, by charging that the hostility to Federal Aid was solely political. "Connecticut couldn't save the people from starvation so the Government stepped in with relief." It is strange, he said, "that now a deliberate anti-administration effort is being put forth to stop another phase of the program for the rehabilitation of some of the needy of Connecticut."⁵²

With the explanation that such a program would be an encroachment of the sovereign rights of the state, the Republicans and the Socialists combined to defeat the bill in the Senate and gained the unrestrained praise of Governor Herman Talmadge of Georgia. The Assembly refused to provide the necessary funds for the extensive building program or for the diversion of highway funds to match Federal monies. Cross estimated that this failure cost the state ten million dollars. On the other hand, the state accepted Federal assistance for relief and public works projects. Although there was a certain consistency in frugality in public expenditures and opposition to Washington's intrusion in state affairs, state's rights do not appear to have been an absolute de-

terminant of political philosophy, but rather a rationale advanced when practical and convenient, as in justification of a lower tax rate or in anticipation of political gains.⁵³

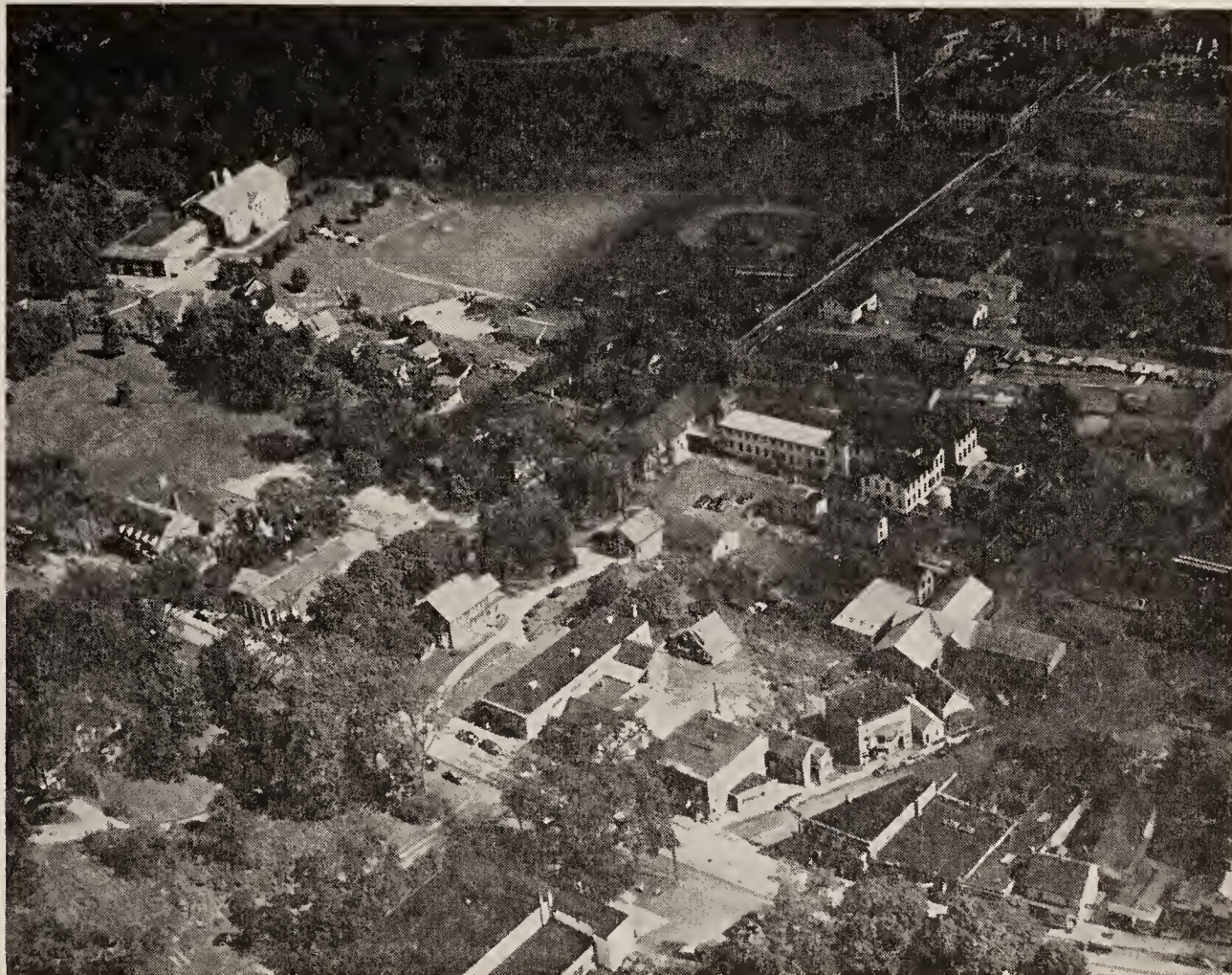
Whereas the State did not take advantage of all permissive legislation or adopt all social measures suggested by the Federal Government, it did, after customary deliberation, eventually adopt measures in accord with the developing attitudes of the time. The opposition of the Manufacturers' Association had been sufficiently neutralized by 1932 that both parties included old age pensions in their political platforms. In the 1933 session, however, enabling legislation failed to pass because of differences over details. "Due to the exigencies of the times," the Department of Welfare reported, "the laws of Connecticut relating to the poor and relief are being examined more critical [*sic*] perhaps than ever before." It was agreed that some of the laws were archaic and that some injustice prevailed. The problems were resolved in 1936 and a bill providing for seven dollars a week for all indigents over 65 was passed with only one vote in opposition. A Bureau of Old Age Assistance was created and merged with the Department of State Agencies and Institutions and with the Department of Public Welfare to form the Office of Public Welfare. Also, a Public Welfare Council was created, one of the functions of which was the care of dependent children. Closely related was a grant by the State of cash assistance to the blind.⁵⁴

Significant but measured advances were made in the legislation for labor. The Board of Arbitration and Mediation, which Cross had earlier sought to revive and which had been given new status through the NRA, was now made "a workable agency for the settlement of strikes and labor disputes." The hours of labor for women and children were reduced from 55 to 48, but with the proviso that in emergencies or at the peak of a season they could work 52 hours a week. Industrial home work was further controlled, but not outlawed. It was permitted to continue in certain areas under licenses granted. Because of the pressure of the agricultural and newspaper interests, it was charged, the State never ratified the Child Labor Amendment. Instead, legislation prohibited the employment of children under sixteen, but those engaged in industrialized agriculture, domestic service, or street trades were excepted from supervision.⁵⁵

Not only the structure of government, but the very strength of the people themselves was tested when the tragedy of the flood of 1936 added to the economic trials of the time. In early March thawing temperatures were accompanied by heavy rains and smaller streams overran their banks. In the first stages of the flood the Red Cross and the Civilian Conservation Corps forwarded foodstuffs and supplies and performed multifarious other services to the towns in Tolland and Windham Counties and to the hard pressed towns west of Hartford. Property damage in Farmington, Unionville, and Collinsville was estimated at a half million dollars and merchants along the east side in Hartford were moving their goods to higher ground. The snow continued to melt and light rains fell over the state on the 16th and 17th. The next day a storm reached New England and the rivers and streams were incapable of handling the increased volume of water. There followed one of the most disastrous floods in the state's history. Dams broke, bridges were swept away, and communications broken. The waters engulfed the streets on the lower east side of Hartford until one-fifth of the city was inundated. Here havoc was wrought in the state business district of Hartford as the water rushed into the storage basements and 5,000 families of the city were affected. Many smaller towns were completely engulfed and 2,250 evacuees were housed and thousands of others fed and clothed by the Red Cross.

An emergency committee was set up in the Governor's office to coordinate all relief efforts. Hundreds and hundreds volunteered. The Red Cross and the Civilian Conservation Corps continue their services, and the American Legion, American Radio League, and the Works Progress Administration helped. The Coast Guard and the Naval Militia patrolled the river, and with citizens risked their lives to save others. Unhappily there were those who sought to profit from the distress. Boat owners in the East Hartford area were apprehended for charging exorbitant prices for rescuing stranded persons. Their racket was short lived as the city of East Hartford hired a fleet of six large boats to continue the rescue service. As the Connecticut River crest of 35 feet was neared on the nineteenth the essential services were maintained only on an emergency basis and the next night they were entirely out of commission. Friday the twentieth was the night of greatest fear. Rumors

spread that the inmates at Wethersfield were in wild insurrection when in reality they were repairing the wall along the river which restrained them. To assist in the protection of property 1,000 national guardsmen were pressed into service to prevent looting. It continued, however, and



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

WATERTOWN

the retailers pressed for greater security. When it was not forthcoming, they dramatized their need by forming their own protective force. Governor Cross responded by requesting Federal troops. The river remained near its peak through March 23. A curfew was imposed on the city and remained in force for five days. As the waters began to recede, river rats invaded the area, and, added to the damage they wrought, was the danger of typhoid. As it increased, inoculation posts were established. By the end of the month the essential services were restored and Hartford and other cities along the river began to remove the debris.

The CCC assisted in this and in disinfecting the houses. As conditions returned to normal the Red Cross began to leave, having spent \$2,500,000 for aid, and by June 1 most of the traces of the flood had been eradicated except along the banks of the rivers.⁵⁶

The catastrophe caused tremendous damages and excited the cooperation that only such a holocaust can command. The State Director for the National Emergency Council reported the role of federal agencies, calling attention to the WPA and the CCC, the two with manpower at their command, who assisted first with flood control and then with flood relief and reclamation. As many as 1,800 CCC workers were engaged, and, on April 1, 3,767 men were employed in 36 communities by WPA. The WPA employed women of relief families in sewing projects in which 30,000 pieces of wearing apparel were made and the services of WPA educational leaders, nurses, and household aides were made available to officials of stricken areas for rehabilitation work. The Federal Government, when the floods first hit Connecticut, made \$220,000 available and later increased this to \$500,000. In addition, the Federal Government appropriated \$3,000,000 for permanent repairs and reconstruction. The Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation supplied car load lots of food and an army convoy of 73 trucks brought blankets, beds, and mattresses. The Resettlement Administration assisted in farm and rural areas, and federal resources for loans were available to home owners and industries. Direct damages were estimated at from \$25,000,000 to \$35,000,000, with 784 buildings in Hartford alone damaged. The indirect damages borne by individuals could not be assessed. In effectiveness in combating such tragedy, Connecticut was eminently successful: only one life was lost in the entire state as a result of the flood.⁵⁷

The flood of 1936 emphasized the need for flood control, but the fear of the encroachment by the Federal Government delayed the effective realization of the idea. Flood control projects were among the most favored projects of the WPA. When the floods began to mount in the early part of March, consideration was given to the erection of a dike along the Connecticut River to protect the business district of Hartford. After the crisis of the eighteenth, WPA agreed to make available immediately \$3,000,000 for works in the stricken area. When the first

allotment was received work was begun on the Park and Colt dikes. The flood had not subsided, however, when a movement was launched to establish an interstate plan. The Flood Control Act of 1934, which was the first explicitly to recognize flood control as a function of the Federal



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

STAFFORD SPRINGS

Government, was conceived as a cooperative effort with the Federal Government bearing most of the cost, but with the state retaining an absolute veto over any project. The Connecticut Valley Authority, under which identification flood control was planned in New England, received a tremendous boost as public officials surveyed the damages of the 1936 flood. After numerous proposals were discussed, the plan of controlling the Connecticut River by means of a series of reservoirs on its upper tributaries was agreed to by the states. In accordance with legislative provisions, the states were to provide the land and the Fed-

eral Government was to bear the cost of construction. Although the General Assembly of Connecticut hesitated, as did the legislatures of other New England states, to approve the plan for fear that it would result in the loss of some part of their sovereignty, it was finally approved. The Federal Power Commission then gave substance to their fears. It asked whether, if Federal funds were used if the project should not then come under the authority of the Federal Power Commission. Its opposition was sufficiently strong to prevent the Congress of the United States from approving another arrangement. The Connecticut Valley Authority was dead. Construction of the Clark and Colt dikes, the construction of the South Meadows and Deeney Lane pumping stations, and the enclosing of the Park River conduit were completed with the assistance of the PWA.⁵⁸

However much the fear of encroachment by the Federal Government discouraged cooperative efforts with the State, the election of 1936 was a sweeping endorsement of New Deal measures. After the usual biennial political aspirations had subsided, Cross was renominated by the Democrats and Roraback's choice, Arthur M. Brown, the State's Attorney for New London County, was nominated by the Republicans. They erred, however, in their judgment that there had been a reversal of public opinion against the New Deal. Cross attacked successfully the plank in their platform which criticized "the use within Connecticut of Federal funds to purchase a surrender of the rights reserved to the states." In the emergency the Governor was "ready to lay the unsubstantial ghost of state sovereignty," and was "ready to accept funds for the aged, the unemployed, dependent children, the blind and the crippled, for humane and educational institutions, for school and other buildings, for the extension of highways, and even for the extermination of mosquitoes." In lieu of federal aid, Cross held up the even more ominous spectre of higher taxes.⁵⁹

The issue of the New Deal in Connecticut was drawn even more pointedly since 1936 was a Presidential election year. In Alfred Landon the Republicans had a candidate who symbolized the antithesis to the relief and recovery program of the last four years. He represented, too, the thinking of segments of the Connecticut population, but his was a political philosophy, as it proved, which was outworn and lacking in an

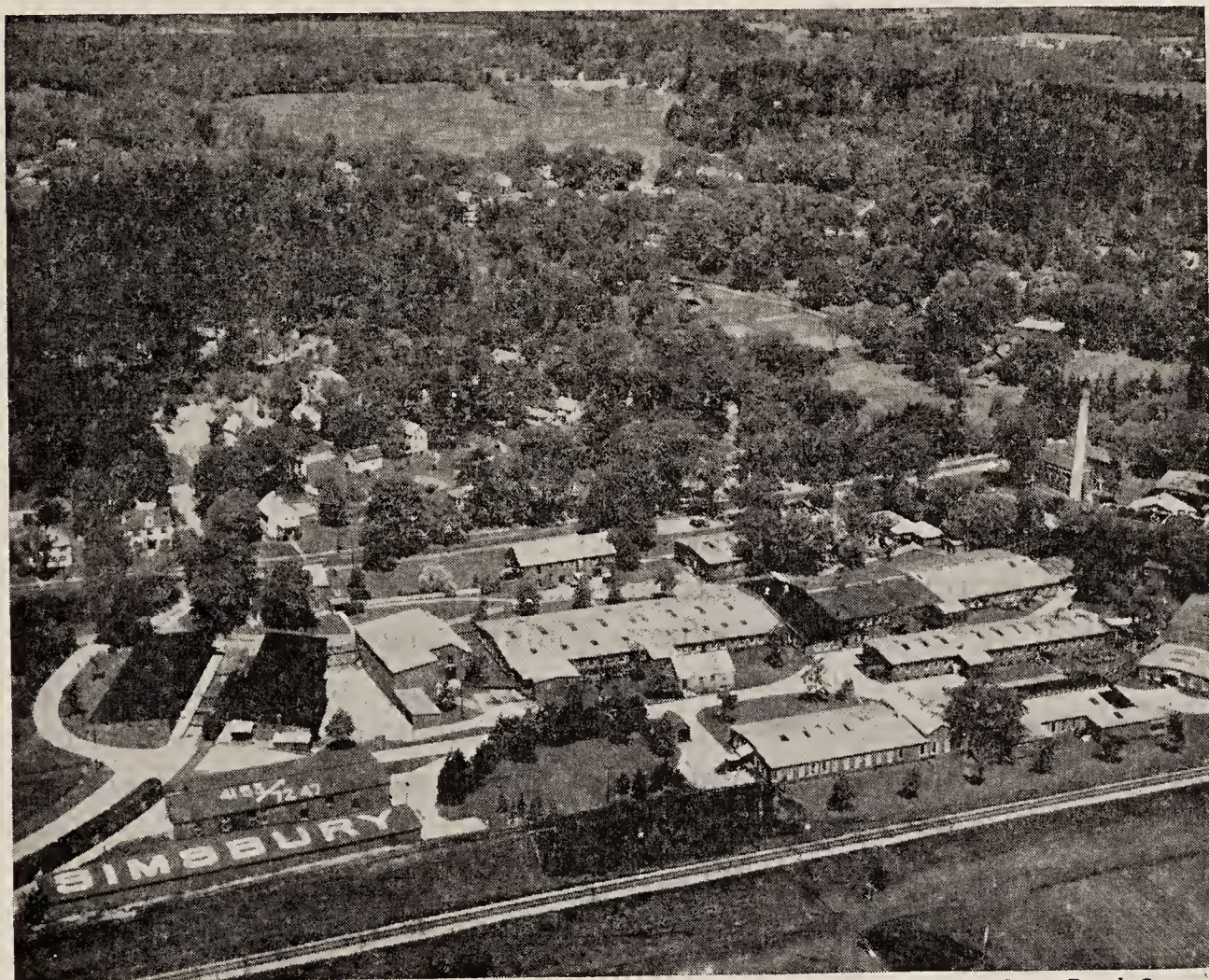
appeal necessary for political success. The trend against the Republicans was given the final push by Roosevelt's visit to the state on October 22. During this he urged the completion of the flood control pact between the New England States. The election results convinced even the stalwarts among the Republicans that the party which stood for progressive legislation had the greatest appeal to the voters. Roosevelt carried the state by over 100,000, the entire state Democratic ticket won by more than 90,000, and the Congressional delegation was solidly Democratic. The *Hartford Courant* soberly conceded that nothing could have been done to have averted defeat. The press of the state confirmed the *Courant's* judgment that the Republicans had done little to attract the liberal voters. A reorganization of the Republican party was needed. It was made necessary and possible when Roraback, Connecticut's dominant political figure of the twentieth century, died the following May.⁶⁰

Not only had the Republicans failed to identify themselves with liberal programs, but the state's failure to pass unemployment compensation forced the calling of a special session of the Assembly. Unemployment insurance proposals had been introduced in successive sessions of the General Assembly since 1931. Once regarded as "a vicious and unsound piece of legislation," the idea had gained support gradually. The Governor had appointed, in 1935, a Commission on Unemployment. Shortly thereafter, in August, 1935, the Federal Social Security Act was passed, eliminating the frequently expressed objection that unemployment insurance would place employers of a state which had unemployment compensation at a competitive disadvantage with those states not having the provision. Effective January 1, 1936, a tax of one percent was placed on employers. It was to increase to two percent in 1937 and to three percent in 1938. Since the employer could deduct this amount from the federal tax, a state which adopted an unemployment compensation plan could, in effect, keep more money in the state. The Unemployment Compensation Commission believed "it would be to the advantage of the State of Connecticut to adopt an Unemployment Compensation Law before the end of 1936" and supported its claim with evidence that the state stood to lose over \$4,000,000 by the end of the year.⁶¹

A special session of the Assembly was obviously necessary. Unemployment Compensation, even in 1936, must not have been a popular move. The calling of the special session was postponed until two days after the election and then reason was given as the necessity of bringing the date of choosing Connecticut electors in conformity with the President's assuming office in January rather than in March. The Commission's recommendation was submitted as better "than any other method yet devised . . . such as the made work, or a dole . . ." and as preferable to losing \$4,000,000 by inaction. In the words of the *Courant* stated as the conservative view a belief "that the act should be fought in Washington . . . while in Hartford the effort should be simply to protect . . . Connecticut's contribution." The bill was compulsory for all employing more than five persons and on an increasing scale to a maximum of 2.7 percent. Benefits which were to start in 1938 were to range from \$7.50 to \$15.00. By July 1, 1938, 500,000 Connecticut workers were covered, and 250,000 initial claims had been filed.⁶² In the same session authorization was granted to begin slum clearance in Bridgeport.

When Cross was inaugurated for the fourth time as Governor of Connecticut, he believed that the time had come to accomplish a basic reorganization of the administrative structure of the state. The General Assembly had created a Reorganization Commission in 1935 charged with reviewing the governmental machinery and with recommending changes in it. The Commission had reported to the Governor in January, 1937, proposing that the 116 administrative departments be reduced to 18 in which related activities would be grouped, that by Constitutional amendment the offices of Treasurer, Comptroller, and Secretary of State be made appointive under the control of the Governor, and that the Governor's veto power be enlarged. They suggested, too, that the Attorney General be appointed by the Judges of the Superior Court. Cross had considered the powers of the Governor so inadequate during his first terms as to make the title empty. He commented subsequently that the Commissioners, who were critical of his policies, seemed to regard themselves responsible to their particular partisan political machinery, not to the Governor. Cross pointed out that the Governor appointed directly very few of the administrative heads;

others were appointed by the Governor and legislators; and many received their appointment from the Assembly. The factional strife which existed in Cross's party involved him at every convention in a struggle to secure running mates of his choice, and may have lessened



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

SIMSBURY

his influence upon the selection of appointees and his control of those appointed. Colonial Connecticut, however, had begun with a fear of a strong executive, and although many previous Governors had advocated the strengthening of the powers of the executive, few laws had ever extended his authority.⁶³

At this time, nevertheless, the Assembly moved with dispatch to effect the organizational changes recommended, which entailed the passage of 107 separate acts, although it refused to reduce the number

of elective offices and guarded its own legislative powers. As Cross stated, "though the General Assembly could not count on a majority to discontinue two small ferries across the Connecticut River, . . . it encountered but faint opposition to the abolition of the great Board of Finance and Control."⁶⁴ A Department of Finance and Control was created in its stead. That the Governor was given direct control over this department, which was responsible for budgeting and procurement, and over the Personnel and Public Works departments was of utmost importance. The Governor's power in fiscal matters was further extended by the creation of a bond commission, chaired by Cross and authorized to issue bonds in the amount of \$25,000,000 and by the designation of the Governor as the administrative agent of the State to apply for and receive Federal funds. It was at this time that the Governor was directed to establish quarterly, rather than annual, allowances for departmental expenditures; empowered to reduce or withhold appropriations for general purposes at his discretion; given a \$100,000 emergency fund each year; and, when the Assembly was not in session, authorized to buy, sell, and exchange land; and specifically empowered to suspend or remove "any officer, commissioner, or deputy, for misconduct, material neglect of duty or incompetence in the conduct of his office." The Governor was placed in control of the executive branch both by the definition of responsibility and by his power over finances.⁶⁵

The Assembly was less eager to effect an extension of the Governor's power as it related to the Assembly, and refused to require a two-thirds vote to override a veto, leaving the requirement of a simple majority in force. There was established, however, a Legislative Council of five members, including the four floor leaders of the House and Senate and the Governor. The Council was expected to continue to review the administrative machinery and to propose needed changes to the Assembly. This allowed the Governor some voice in planning a phase of the legislative program in consultation with leaders of both parties. Several bills to make further improvements in the administrative machinery of the state were drafted before the next session of the Assembly.⁶⁶

In the reorganization, Cross had secured the power and the administrative machinery he desired. As he continued his administration,

however, he was beset with a bitter quarrel between two of his Department heads and scandal reached high into the executive branch. One new factor, the developing strength of organized labor, had to be faced. This factor, perhaps, was shaped by the depression and the resultant federal and state measures. One old factor, ravaging nature, again, took a disastrous toll. All this, along with a recession, combined to limit Cross to the completion of his term and to allow the decade to be ended, as it began, under the aegis of the Republican Party.

Organized labor was exerting an increasingly greater influence in the state. Its bargaining position had been greatly strengthened as a result of the guarantees established to protect the rights of collective bargaining and the establishment of the Committee for Industrial Organization in November, 1935. The extension of labor activity is indicated by the increase in the number of cases brought before the Board of Arbitration and Mediation. These raised from 11 in 1935 to 32 in 1936, and involved 9,474 strikers in the latter year as compared to 4,246 in 1935. The six strikes in which the efforts of the Board were unsuccessful were disturbing. The most serious of these was that of the workers of the Remington Rand Company in Middletown. The Governor, at the request of the Mayor of Middletown, sent State Police to assist the local police in the maintenance of law and order. Inasmuch as the company was incorporated in Delaware and had plants in New York and Ohio, where workers were also on strike, the company, by denying the jurisdictional rights of any body, state or national, successfully avoided any negotiation. The strike continued without interruption until it erupted in violence on July 8 as strikers and strike breakers conflicted. Difficulties reached a climax in September when the state police used tear gas to break up a conflict in the streets of the city. The American Federation of Labor insisted that the troops be withdrawn, while the Mayor requested that the National Guard be called. The Governor acceded to neither request, but the presence of police was continued to maintain law and order.⁶⁷ The Remington Rand strike continued until 1940 when the operations of the company were transferred out of the state.

The Governor, however, did not favor labor under all circumstances. When in February 1937 the strikers at the Electric Boat Com-

pany in Groton sought to enforce their demands by a "sit down" strike, the Governor acted with determination. He interpreted the right to strike guaranteed by the state as not extending to the right to seize another's property, and the State Police, armed with bench warrants



(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

MIDDLETOWN

charging the strikers with trespassing on the company's property, evicted the strikers from the plant.⁶⁸ The issue which further projected labor into the center of public interest was the bill presented unsuccessfully to the 1937 session of the General Assembly to establish a forty hour week. John J. Egan of the Connecticut Federation of Labor warned that, if the bill were not passed, Connecticut might expect difficulty as serious as that which had paralyzed Michigan. The principal issue, as represented by Charles W. Eyanson of the Connecticut

Manufacturers' Association, was the recognition of the unions themselves. He concluded, "We anticipate an epidemic of strikes."⁶⁹ In 1937, the number of strikes, in which the Board of Arbitration and Mediation was asked to intervene, increased to 80 and involved 13,000 employees. The major factor in this increase, in the opinion of the Board of Mediation and Arbitration, was the validation by the Supreme Court of the United States of the Wagner Act, which gave legal sanction to collective bargaining.⁷⁰ At its 1937 convention, the Connecticut Federation of Labor recorded that it would work for "the defeat of the enemies of labor legislation" and attempt to secure "the nomination in the primaries and the election of legislators who will carry through the mandate of the people when in office."⁷¹

The rivers and streams of the state were already at flood stage when a devastating hurricane struck on September 21, 1938. Heavy rains beginning September 17, particularly in the area east of Hartford, were followed by a deluge during which rain fell at the rate of two inches an hour in some areas. The greatest volume, 17.07 inches, was recorded at Portland. At a season of the year "when every natural deterrent to a great flood was present," the rivers and streams in the eastern part of the state "ragged through their valleys . . . , wrecking many dams, bridges, highways, railways, and other structures while inundating new areas of land." In the western sector, new flood records were established and the Connecticut River approached the record level of 1936.⁷² Routine warning of a hurricane 500 miles off the Leeward Islands on the 16th were changed to storm warnings along the eastern seaboard on the morning of the 21st as the "eye" of the storm altered its course while increasing its speed to up to 60 miles an hour. It reached the vicinity of New York around 2:30; within another hour it reached New Haven; and, at 4:17, the center of the storm passed to the west of Hartford.⁷³

With the record of the havoc of the hurricane and the flood there was mixed the heroic with the tragic, the bizarre with the credulous. Western Connecticut suffered severely, but far less than the eastern sector where gusts of wind increased in velocity up to 100 miles an hour. Along the shore there was left a strip "pock-marked with disaster." At Savin Rock the *Thunderbolt*, "New England's most thrilling ride,"

was a mass of twisted steel. A conductor of the New Haven near Stonington, while the waters were rising in the floor of the train, herded the passengers into a single car, and the engineer nosed the engine through debris and fallen wires across the perilous causeway. In the wake of the storm firemen battled the flames in what seemed a hopeless effort to protect New London's business district, when the wind changed and averted further damage. The next day the National Guard arrived to afford protection and to assist in cleaning up the area. Along the Connecticut River 100 families in Middletown lost their homes, while the residents of Portland and New Britain lived in fear that the dams restraining the reservoirs in their cities would not hold. In Hartford five persons lost their lives and 22 were injured. As the hurricane roared through the city the capitol grounds were ravaged. Hundreds of men joined in their efforts in building dikes to protect the Colt's Fire Arms Company and the next day they were joined by the National Guard. In Rockville, the waters raced through the sluiceway of the mills and the employees of the woolen mills crossed to safety on narrow planks. The dairy and the chicken farmers were hard hit; the orchards and the tobacco sheds were destroyed. Losses mounted in the millions. The damage to state buildings was severe and the loss in private property even greater. Thirty-eight bridges had been destroyed on major highways and 50 or more dams had been damaged. The state parks and forests were hard hit. Over 100,000 public shade trees were lost and as many more privately owned. It is almost impossible to tabulate all of the material losses, but greatest of all were those for which there is no material equation, the 80 or more lives.⁷⁴

For the second time in thirty months the strength of the population was pitted against the forces of nature. As citizens and local governments moved to meet the crisis the resources of the state and federal governments were called upon to relieve the destitute and to assist in the recovery. A meeting of local officials to survey the damage preceded a conference of New England states where Harry Hopkins offered the resources of the WPA. Twenty thousand WPA workers were made available to aid in reconstruction, with 500 or more working on the highways alone. The telephone companies mobilized to restore service and ham radio operators assisted. The forests were closed to hunting

and recreation as state and federal monies were provided for their restoration. The people and the communities battled so heroically that their efforts, in the words of a national magazine, “revealed anew Yankee courage and ingenuity.”⁷⁵



MOOSUP

(Courtesy Conn. Devel. Comm.)

“Premonitions,” wrote Governor Cross, “of a storm brewing over the Highway Department came in the spring of 1937” when reports were received of the “very high prices” being paid for land acquired in the construction of Merritt Parkway. The new Public Works Department, however, provided a means whereby the necessary corrective measures could be taken without arousing an unsuspecting public. The legislation establishing the department gave it jurisdiction over the

real estate of the state, but without specific mention of the Highway Department. The Attorney General ruled that the main intent of the legislation was to place the highways under the jurisdiction of the new department, thereby reducing the Highway Commissioner to a subordinate position. The Superior Court, however, in October reversed the view of the Attorney General. Meanwhile, apparently on the assumption that he would have administrative responsibility, Cross requested the Commissioner of Public Works, Robert A. Hurley, to investigate the business methods of the Highway Department, and after the Superior Court's decision, Hurley continued the investigation. On January 6, he submitted a scathing denunciation of the operations of the Highway Department, especially as these pertained to the Merritt Parkway. McDonald, the Highway Commissioner, replied with an equally strong defense and the Governor was in the position of having two of his department heads at swords points as a result of a circumstance which he had helped to create. The evidence of wrongdoing could no longer be disregarded. Three days before Hurley submitted his report, the Attorney General submitted the record of 200 real estate transactions, in some of which criminal actions were evident. A grand jury investigation was ordered, and in it unusual real estate dealings were revealed. In one instance, where nineteen acres of land were sold for \$96,621, a palatial home was moved to a new site. The rights-of-way here were given to the parkway, and two years later the new site was sold for \$148,000 including the right-of-way. More than 50 cases were reported indicating that G. LeRoy Kemp, the state's purchasing agent, provided two broker associates with advanced information concerning the route of the parkway, which assured them lucrative profits. All three were indicted, and Kemp subsequently served a term at Wethersfield. The Highway Commissioner was so severely criticized that, ironically, the man who had been largely responsible for the development of the Merritt Parkway was forced to resign before the first section was completed. On June 29, 1938, Governor Cross officially dedicated the eighteen miles from the New York line to Norwalk.⁷⁶

At the very time the story was breaking on the difficulties within the Highway Department, the new Comptroller of the city of Waterbury, Sherwood L. Rowland, announced that he could not find any

complete financial records of transactions since 1930, that is, during the term of his recent Democratic opponent, Daniel J. Leary. Frank Hayes, then mayor of Waterbury and Lieutenant Governor, sought to block the investigation. His reasons were suggested when it was disclosed that a very large fee had been paid to the Waterbury group by lobbyists while Hayes, as Lieutenant Governor, presided over the Senate. The report of the Grand Jury investigation was published May 20, 1938, and charged that, during the administration of Hayes, the city of Waterbury had been swindled out of "millions of dollars . . . by a powerful, ruthless, and corrupt group of men who had managed the affairs of the city for personal financial gain and political advancement." The immediate arrests and prosecution of 27 persons on the charge of conspiracy to defraud was demanded. There were countless instances of disguised financial dealings wherein the city was charged for services never rendered and others of overcharging, with Leary, Hayes, and their accomplices pocketing the difference. Leary had sought to extend his activities by persuading the Senate Chairman of Public Health to introduce into the Senate, over which Hayes presided, a bill making it mandatory for all public places to be equipped with an electric steam sterilizer which didn't sterilize. The Grand Jury revealed that, in promoting his scheme, Leary secured as lobbyist the services of Charles E. Williamson, a former State Senator, and the backstage assistance of Harry Mackenzie, second in command of the Republican Party. To make the job easier 2,700 stocks were distributed among five members of the Senate, three Democrats and two Republicans.

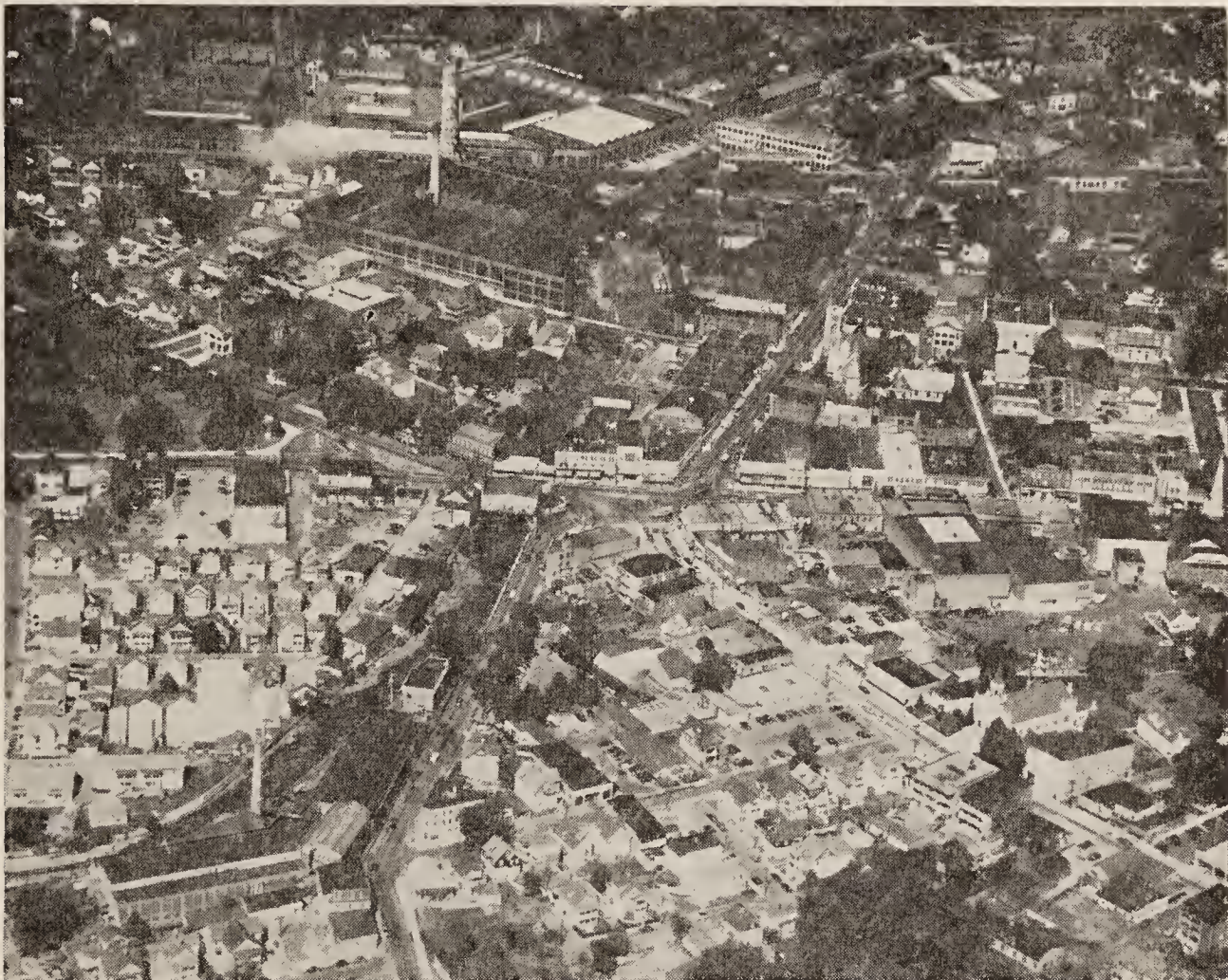
The cases brought against the Senators were nulled on the grounds that the evidence of acceptance of the stocks two months after the adjournment of the Assembly was unwarranted inference of their receiving them for services rendered. Mackenzie and Williamson served jail sentences, but Hayes continued to plead innocence. Against the recommendation of the Governor and his friends, Hayes persisted in continuing as Lieutenant Governor, but with the tacit understanding that he would not perform the duties of Lieutenant Governor while the case was in the courts. The case dragged on until August, 1939, when Hayes, along with 22 others, was convicted of conspiracy to defraud the city of Waterbury. The decision was confirmed by the Supreme Court of the

State in March, 1941. In the meantime the scandals in Waterbury, in the Highway Department, and the involvement of men in public life in the attempt to influence legislation left deep scars on the Democratic Party as it had on the Republican two decades earlier.⁷⁷

Politics in Connecticut were in an uncertain state as the 1938 state election approached. While Governor Cross was not in any way personally involved in the scandals, yet it could be charged "that the scandals had occurred during his administration, and that due diligence on his part could have helped to prevent them." The recession of 1937 had diminished the aura of the New Deal and the Governor had already passed his 76th birthday. Yet, the proverbial "unfinished business" lured him to make himself available. Once he did, there was little the Democratic Party could do other than to renominate the state ticket, with the exception of replacing T. Frank Hayes by Colonel Thomas Hewes. Within the Republican party there had not emerged a strong leader to take the place of Roraback. There resulted a mad scramble, not only for the Gubernatorial nomination, but for leadership of the party. William J. Pape, the respected publisher of the Waterbury papers who had ferreted out the initial information in that city's scandals, was ambitious for the position, as was William H. Blodgett, a remnant of the Roraback machine. A group of young Republicans, however, seized control of the party's machinery and supported the election of Benjamin A. Harwood as Chairman of the State Central Committee and of Raymond E. Baldwin, the majority leader of the House in the 1933 session of the Assembly, as their nominee for Governor. A third personality in the campaigning was Jasper McLevy, more McLevy than Socialist, more Republican than Democrat, and more for Bridgeport than for any. The number of votes he would attract from the Democratic candidate was uncertain.⁷⁸

The campaign was one in which the incumbent was forced to defend his record, an advantage for the Republicans which they were quick to seize. Baldwin carried on a vigorous campaign, utilizing all the means of communication. The Republicans denied that economies had been affected as a result of the reorganization, attacked sharply the merit system, and charged that the building program had bogged down in ineffectiveness. Notwithstanding the fact that the

state's \$12,000,000 deficit had accrued during the dark days of the depression, and especially as compared to the \$8,000,000 surplus Cross inherited when he became Governor, the deficit loomed large. Cross's age came in for an occasional comment and near the end of the campaign a



(Photo by James Miller)

TORRINGTON—HEART OF BUSINESS DISTRICT, PRIOR TO FLOOD OF 1955

public protest against car inspection gave the Republicans a lift. The Governor had speculated that if the total vote for McLevy should be held under 25,000 a Democratic victory was assured, but if McLevy's vote mounted to 50,000, the Democrats were in trouble. Because of the unusual circumstances in Waterbury and the strength of McLevy in Bridgeport, Cross had all but written off these cities in the early stages of the campaign, but a concentrated effort in the last stages was to cut McLevy's assumed margin there appreciably. What Cross did not an-

ticipate was the placing of a fourth ticket on the ballot under the banner of the Union Party (the Father Coughlin Party of 1936), but with Baldwin at the head of the ticket. The legality of the party had been upheld by the Superior Court and there was not time for an appeal to the Supreme Court. On the eve of the election, nevertheless, *Time Magazine* speculated that "if old Governor Cross loses to Republican Baldwin . . . , it will largely be due to local by-plays and political scandals."⁷⁹ As the votes came in on election night, Cross piled up the expected majorities in the cities, and even though McLevy received in excess of 160,000 votes, Cross maintained his lead until the results in the small towns were reported. Baldwin "squeezed through by 2,700 votes." Of his total, 3,046 were gained under the aegis of the union ticket. "Uncle Toby" waited impatiently on inauguration day, then, with cheroot in hand, he doffed his top hat to public service. The first log on the course of contemporary Connecticut had been completed.⁸⁰

Connecticut, as other states, perhaps owes more to the New Deal than it would ever care to admit. The part which the New Deal played in the industrial recovery of the state remains a matter of conjecture, with the contemporary historian likely to weigh the evidence in accord with his own political and social inclinations, but there can be little doubt that reformers took advantage of the depression to force reforms upon business which made for a better society and in many respects were of greatest benefit to business itself. Labor entered the era depressed and insipid and at its end was strong and aggressive with an implied dictum to assume responsibilities commensurate with its new strength. Citizens were taking a far more active part in public affairs than formerly. The number voting was about twice as many as those voting in 1920 and this increase was almost entirely in the urban centers, the symbol and the result of industrial civilization. In some measure "the shell of crystallized procedure" had been cracked. In this transition in Connecticut life the state was fortunate in having Wilbur Cross as its chief executive. In a sense, the service he performed for the state paralleled that which had been performed by Oliver Wolcott more than a hundred years before, when the Federalist-Congregational hold on the state was broken. After the thirties, there was no turning back. Present-day Democrats find at least an intellectual affinity with the

Grand Old Man from Yale. Raymond Baldwin was to turn the Republicans, also, gently toward the future.

NOTES—CHAPTER XXXII

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- ³ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-13, 65.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.
- ⁵ Message of the Governor, 1931 (Hartford, 1931), pp. 8-13; Message of the Governor, 1933 (Hartford, 1933), pp. 4-6; Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, pp. 253-55; Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 349-53.
- ⁶ "Measures to Alleviate Unemployment," pp. 2-4.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.
- ⁸ Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 355-57.
- ⁹ Report of the Bank Commissioner (Hartford, 1932), pp. 5-11.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.* (Hartford, 1934), pp. 451 ff.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.* (Hartford, 1930), pp. 14-17; *ibid.*, 1932, pp. 1-11.
- ¹² Emergency Relief Commission, 1934, pp. 29-30; Margaret H. Hogg, "Ebb-Tide of Employment," *The Survey*, Vol. 69, Aug., 1933, p. 279.
- ¹³ "Measures to Alleviate Unemployment," pp. 38-42, 58-68.
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- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 32; Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1929, "Unemployment," I (Washington, 1931), p. 191; Report of the Emergency Relief Commission (Wallingford, Conn., 1934), pp. 27-31.
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- ²¹ *Hartford Courant*, Sept. 10, 1932; George E. Clapp, "The Kaiser of Connecticut," *The American Mercury*, Vol. 129, June, 1933, p. 229; G. C. Edgar, "Insurgents in Connecticut," *The Nation*, Vol. 135, Oct. 26, 1932, p. 475.
- ²² *Ibid.*; Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, pp. 265-70.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 270-73; *Hartford Times*, Oct. 27, Nov. 2, 1932; *Hartford Courant*, Oct. 28, 29, 1932.
- ²⁴ Edgar, "Insurgents in Connecticut," pp. 395-96.
- ²⁵ Statement of Vote (Hartford, 1932), pp. 3-53; Clapp, "The Kaiser of Connecticut," p. 229; Dever Allen, "Connecticut, A Case in Point," *The World Tomorrow*, Vol. 15, Dec. 7, 1932, p. 546.
- ²⁶ Message of the Governor (Hartford, 1933); Report of the Budget Bureau of the State Board of Finance and Control (Hartford, 1933), pp. 4-6; Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, p. 283.

- ²⁷ *Ibid.*; Message of the Governor, 1933.
- ²⁸ Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, pp. 282-85; Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 362-66; Report of the Emergency Relief Commission, 1934, pp. 16, 43.
- ²⁹ Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, pp. 278, 285-90; Raymond E. Baldwin, *Let's Go Into Politics* (New York, 1952), pp. 74-75.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74; Message of the Governor, 1933, pp. 14-15; *ibid.*, 1935, pp. 16-17; Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, pp. 291-92; Report of the Bank Commissioner (Hartford, 1934), pp. 1-7.
- ³¹ Report of the Emergency Relief Commission, 1934, pp. 16-17, 36; Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, p. 283; Baldwin, *Politics*, p. 74.
- ³² *Hartford Courant*, March 22, 23, 1933.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, April 6, June 19, 1933.
- ³⁴ Emergency Relief Commission, 1934, p. 66; *ibid.*, 1937, p. x.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 1937, pp. 56-61, 66; *Hartford Courant*, June 2, 1933.
- ³⁶ Report of the Emergency Relief Commission, 1934, p. 61.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1937, pp. 52-56.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-91; Summary of Relief and Federal Works Program Statistics, Federal Works Progress Administration (Washington, 1941), p. ix.
- ³⁹ Analysis of Civil Works Program Statistics (Washington, 1939), pp. 3-30; Report of the Emergency Relief Association, 1934, pp. 57-60; *ibid.*, 1937, pp. 28-38, 61-63; Summary of Relief and Federal Work Program Statistics, 1941, p. ix.
- ⁴⁰ An Analysis of Projects Placed in Operation through June 30, 1937, Works Progress Administration (Washington, 1937), p. 40; Summary of Relief and Federal Work Program Statistics, Federal Works Progress Administration (Washington, 1941), pp. 11-12; Donald S. Howard, *The WPA and Federal Relief Policy* (New York, 1943), p. 636; "WPA Federal Art Projects in Connecticut" (New Haven, 1939); Report of the Emergency Relief Commission, 1937, p. 65.
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- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 504-507; *The New Republic*, Vol. 80, Aug. 22, 1934, p. 46; *Hartford Courant*, Sept. 7, Nov. 7, 1934; Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, pp. 301-11; Statement of Vote, Hartford, 1934.
- ⁴⁶ Message of the Governor (Hartford, 1935), pp. 3-24.
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- ⁴⁹ *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 11, 1935; *Bridgeport Post*, Jan. 11, 1935.
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- ⁵³ *Ibid.*; Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, pp. 319-21.
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- ⁶³ Cross, *Connecticut Yankee*, pp. 358-66; Message of the Governor (Hartford, 1935), pp. 20 ff.
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- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 358-66.
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- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 351-54; Report of the Labor Commissioner (Hartford, 1939, pp. 49-53.
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ADDENDUM

(Separately Indexed)

Chapter XXXIII

The Home Front in World War II

THE ISSUES of recovery faded with the beginning of World War II and the realization of its significance to Connecticut and its citizens. Manufacturers accepted the war contracts which poured into the state with a cautious skepticism born out of the truths of readjustments of the First World War. Governor Baldwin sensed earlier than most the possibility of the United States' involvement and had taken valuable first steps when bombs rained on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. Connecticut citizens, like those of all America, stood ready to do what was necessary and more. Thousands joined the fighting forces and thousands more manned the machines of production. Home front problems, such as housing, rationing, bond drives, and scrap metal collections were contended with. In the course of achieving victory, social changes came which extended the principles of reform that had been introduced during the period of recovery from the recession. In the end, it was an inspiring, but not an unblemished record.

Recovery and Politics

Raymond Baldwin, the newly elected Governor, endeavored to bring the traditional tenets of Republicanism into harmony with the forces of society and the realities of politics. He accepted a responsibility for formulating a program to achieve recovery, but believed this must be accomplished through the genius of private enterprise and by taking the government out of business. "In time of economic stress it is the duty of government to care for its citizens, to help them, not to become the wards of the government, but to get back to jobs in private business and industry. . . . No government," the Governor said, "can provide permanent

employment . . . unless it steps out of the role of democracy, . . . entering the field of private enterprise in direct conflict with its own citizens." He contended that the limits of progress in labor legislation had by no means been reached. "Business men and manufacturers . . . should realize . . . that they not only owe a duty to the stockholders . . . but to the job-holders as well." Labor, he believed was a consumer as well as a producer and had an equal right with capital to organize and bargain collectively. The unreasonable and unrestricted use of the injunction in labor disputes was gone forever he thought.¹ After the Assembly had passed an anti-injunction bill, defined the conspiracy law, provided a uniform wages and hour law on public works, revised the unemployment compensation, and outlawed wage kickbacks, Baldwin claimed with some justification that the "1939 General Assembly was one of the most liberal towards labor of any in our history." "We proved," he said, "that labor doesn't have to look to some political machine, doesn't have to bargain for a square deal, not with a truly representative government," because, "a truly representative government represents the people, and you, the people are labor."²

In that legislation for which Baldwin believed the Assembly would be best remembered it took a characteristically conservative approach. The separations of the judiciary from the legislative branch of the Government had been in evolution since the adoption of the Constitution of 1818. A most significant step had been taken in 1880, when it was provided that the Judges of the Supreme and Superior Courts be appointed by the Assembly, but on the recommendation of the Governor. The method was extended to the Courts of Common Pleas during the first administration of Governor Cross who sought repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, to have the judges of the minor courts named in the same manner. It was recognized in 1939 that the criticisms of the Justice of the Peace Courts were oftentimes justified, but because of the valuable service they rendered, particularly in the rural areas, their elimination was not favored. The basic issue was evaded by the initiation of a constitutional amendment on the appointment of all judges while an effort was made to assure a uniformity of operation in the minor courts by altering the laws governing jurisdiction and procedure.³

This, as other legislation, was to be accomplished within the prevalent concepts of economy.

So insistent was the Governor on a balanced budget that he recom-

mended, and forced through the House, a proposal that the monies be diverted from the highway fund to the general fund. So heated was the controversy that an amendment to the constitution was proposed to prohibit the diversion of the state highway funds. The *Courant* counseled against such a proposal, pointing to the dangers of anticipating the needs of the future. "Under an ideal situation," the paper editorialized, "all revenues that the State derives from any source would constitute a reservoir from which money could be drawn in proportion to existing needs at any given time, the sole restriction being that the outgo should never leave the reservoir without a margin." The *Courant* was not certain that the state was ready to make use of its resources in this manner, and the "road block" was sure that it was not. Charles Arrigoni of Durham led the opposition to the proposal which was successfully delayed until other means were devised for balancing the budget and saving the Governor from infamy in the eyes of his own party. The Governor could happily boast of "the greatest record of economy in government this state has ever seen."⁴

Recovery, reform, and politics, during the period 1939–1945 came to be engulfed, first, in the issue of war or peace and, after Pearl Harbor, in the effort of winning of the conflict. As the crisis mounted, Americans broke with tradition and elected Franklin D. Roosevelt for a third term. In Connecticut his majority was such as to enable the relatively inexperienced campaigner, Robert A. Hurley, to defeat the Republican incumbent, Raymond Baldwin, by a majority of over 13,000.⁵

A Basis for Defense

During the campaign Hurley charged that the state defense effort made during Baldwin's administration was little more than a publicity stunt, but it would seem that more had been accomplished. Baldwin had regarded war and the United States' participation in it as inevitable. He had warned that if war came Connecticut would be "the armory of the nation," and had urged sweeping reforms of the state's National Guard upon an unresponsive Assembly. As the danger had increased, however, the Governor had organized, the following Spring, the State Defense Council, which in 1943 became the Connecticut War Council. This was established to further citizen activities and to coordinate all activities of the State. Information was collected concerning available workmen and their skills

and available equipment and training facilities. To supplement state defenses an appeal was addressed in the fall of 1940 to local communities to organize for defense. Before Baldwin retired from office in January, 1941, planning had been accomplished for an air warning service, which became of greater importance as the threat of alien aircraft increased as the state became the center of war production.⁶ The system had not been perfected but an important basis for defense had been laid.

With the news of September 15, 1940, that night raiders on London had been beaten back, came the information that Congress had voted the nation's first peace time draft. A first step which had been taken in the creation of a new army for the United States by the calling the National Guard was not considered adequate for the perilous conditions which were developing rapidly. Although in retrospect the necessity of the draft has been acknowledged, the Connecticut Federation of Labor in September, 1940, recorded its opposition. Equally strong protests were made against the plan authorizing the president to command the industrial plants. In spite of such protests, Governor Baldwin had anticipated the necessity of increasing the armed forces and, when the announcement of Congressional action requiring a draft came, the state's plan for registration was nearly perfected. Under the direction of Colonel Ernest L. Averill, Connecticut's National Guard had been working on the problem of registration for almost a year. A local board was established for each 30,000 of the population, in general conformity with the state's senatorial districts. On October 16, 222,556 Connecticut residents between the ages of 21 and 36 registered with local draft boards. As Draft numbers, exemptions, and deferments became conversation topics, the retention in industry of those necessary to the production of war materials became the policy of the Selective Service boards in the months before Pearl Harbor.⁷

War Boom and Its Problems

War contracts began to flood the manufacturers of the state by the Fall of 1940 and required enlargement of facility and labor force. Pratt and Whitney began its fourth major plant expansion in September in anticipation of a \$17,000,000 contract. In contrast, fifteen months earlier, a \$300,000 order was considered newsworthy. The "unwise experiment" of the last several years had not undermined the industrial economy as Bald-

win had feared, rather the state was fast becoming "the arsenal of the nation." By November it was claimed that Connecticut was the leader in the production of arms, ammunition, airplane engines, and propellers.⁸ Workers from other states came to Connecticut at the rate of 200 a day and these flocked to Connecticut cities. In Bridgeport, for example, the number of workers increased from 34,000 in February, 1940, to 45,000 in February, 1941. Nevertheless, it was largely because of the lack of skilled workmen that Sikorsky found that it could not expand as quickly as anticipated and by January, 1941, was nine months behind in plane deliveries. To improve the skills of the labor force, United Aircraft, in cooperation with the state, introduced an intensive job training program to supplement that already begun by the trade schools of the state.⁹

The boom, however, was viewed with caution, and, some of its social consequences with concern. War earnings were reflected in increased spending. Connecticut residents had not forgotten the thirties, however, and savings, too, showed sharp rises. The rush to open Christmas Club accounts in Bridgeport was so great in 1940 that the clubs were closed to new applicants ten days after they were opened. Industrial leaders, who recognized that they had to engage in defense production if they were to receive new materials, were apprehensive of the new taxes they would be forced to pay on their expanded facilities. There was a certain Yankee caution about revealing to inquiring reporters the extent of the boom in one's own community. A resident of Derby replied only, "We aren't getting any more than our share." Some cities, such as Bridgeport, were cautious as a result of experiences after World War I when they were left with deserted factories, unemployment, and depressed real estate values. Trailer camps, like those in East Hartford, presented new problems. Stories of Negroes sleeping in warehouses were disquieting, as were those of workers bivouacking in cars. Of even greater concern were the workers with families which placed an ever increasing strain on the housing and public facilities of the cities.¹⁰

The housing situation had become critical. The vacancies in the principal cities were all but exhausted by the Fall of 1940. Rents were skyrocketing and speculators were exacting their profits. Local defense councils were warned that conditions would become worse and were urged to prepare to take necessary action. There were wide differences of opinion

as to the housing needs of the state. The Federal Housing Coordinator denied emphatically that the Federal Government was inclined to build the 9,100 units which the Navy had estimated were needed in Connecticut. Even after the requests were scaled down to 6,000 for Connecticut's largest cities, the completion of the first units were delayed until the Summer of 1941. Ironically, Bridgeport, where the need was the greatest, dragged its heels on defense housing. Jasper McLevy, the Socialist Mayor, whose sense of economy oftentimes determined him to oppose even mildly liberal programs, aligned himself with those who regarded federal housing as a "humbug." He seems to have obstructed defense housing beyond a justifiable point in view of the pressing needs. The Mayor simply did not want the Federal Government in Bridgeport "squandering the public money." The Mayor's argument that federal housing would over-house the city was not self-evident to inquiring reporters who noted from 60 to 75 newly evicted tenants looking for low cost housing as a result of landlords' boosting rents beyond the point the tenants could pay. Although the speculators were having a field day, the Mayor delayed naming a rent control board until August 7, 1941, and then only under pressure from Bridgeport citizens and Federal authorities.¹¹

A State on the Alert

The social issues attending war production were subordinated to national defense when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. All municipal fire and police departments were instructed to be prepared to meet an extraordinary emergency, and special police were placed on the New Haven Railroad. Manufacturing plants engaged in defense contracts took immediate steps against sabotage; attention focused on the 130,000 aliens reported in the state and particularly on the 800 of these who held permits. At their drinking places, it was claimed, information was exchanged freely. With fears rampant, the employees of liquor stores were required to declare their citizenship. Overzealous patriots, however, were discouraged by the Mayor of Hartford and urged to leave the apprehension of the enemy to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Cities and towns took on the air of a combat area as artillery and anti-aircraft guns rolled through the streets. Three-inch guns and powerful search lights were hauled into place to protect industries such as Pratt and Whitney. The air alarm system was

placed on a war basis with more than 800 citizens manning 166 observation posts to scan the skies for enemy aircraft. Steps were taken to establish air raid shelters and Connecticut cities practiced blackouts.¹² Industry announced intent to further increase production capacities and the state labor commissioner issued an urgent call for skilled workers engaged in non-essential pursuits. Immediately after the news of Pearl Harbor a longshoremen's strike was called off at New London. Local draft boards were alerted to be ready to register all between the ages of 19 and 65 if Congress should so rule and the tempo of the draft was increased to meet the expected demands.¹³

Conversion of Industry

The Connecticut Manufacturers Association had announced in the Spring of 1942 the readiness of Connecticut industry to convert as necessary to war production, and much of the industrial capacity was soon converted. The International Silver Company was the first to convert completely, stopping the production of silverware by 1943 and producing in its stead more than 100 different products which included shells, rifle parts, incendiary bombs, surgical instruments, cartridge clips, and mess kits. Hundreds made a partial conversion. General Electric of Bridgeport, for example, transformed its washing machine division to war production, and Bigelow-Sanford turned to the manufacture of blankets and cotton duck. Some, such as Landers, Frary, and Clark of New Britain, were forced into war production by government orders to discontinue the manufacture of electrical appliances. In contrast, even though the Government had published a long list of items "from aircraft cannon to crow quill pens" in October, 1941, and had invited small manufacturers to try their hand at the new products, adequate work for the small manufacturers continued to be a matter of concern to the Manufacturers Association in the state. Those not engaged directly in war production suffered from a scarcity of materials. In a special study of the Bigelow-Sanford Company, however, Ewing concluded that "it is not to be supposed war production was an unqualified success." Mechanics were frequently not sufficiently skilled in the new production to maintain proper controls. Some blankets from Bigelow-Sanford, for example, were overweight and others were underweight; and it was charged that government inspectors would accept the former, but

not the latter. Not all manufacturers fared easily, nor shared equally, in the expanded war economy.¹⁴

There were those accused of making excessive profits. Carl Vinson charged that United Aircraft was making a profit of 27 per cent. The company was quick to draw the distinction between gross and net profits and to point out that the latter had been seven per cent in 1940, five per cent in 1941, and was expected to decrease further in 1942. The *Hartford Courant* lamented that it was "a great pity that consciously or unconsciously it [the Naval Affairs Committee] should have led the less intelligent part of the public to believe that the corporation's excellent performance was rewarded with undue profits" and warned that no one reading a financial statement should be deceived by gross profits. The *Courant* placed a greater emphasis on the quantity of supplies needed and on the speed with which they were required than on profits and concluded that United Aircraft, in supplying the necessities of war, did a truly "superb job."¹⁵

War Time Programs and Controls

To preserve the necessary supplies, the Federal Government rationed critical materials through a new Office of Price Administration. Governor Hurley appointed Chester Bowles, who had earned enough money in advertising to get out of it, as head of the Office of Price Administration in Connecticut. Warm and forceful, courageous and ambitious, a graduate of Choate and Yale, this grandson of Samuel Bowles, who founded the *Springfield Republican*, approached his assignment with a determination to accomplish a vital part of the war effort. Despite the view that the rationing of tires and cars was temporary, local rationing boards were established within a month after Pearl Harbor. The vast majority of Connecticut citizens accepted the regulations and abided by them honestly; but the change of habits enforced by rationing, such as boarding a bus rather than driving one's own car, was not accepted without some grumbling. Then too, there were the hoarders, the chiselers, the bootleggers, and others who sought to make a fast dollar out of the citizens' distress. As regulations and administrative machinery became established, violations were held within bounds. Effective rationing required that supplies be preserved for military use while sufficient amounts be provided for essential home front activities.

The decision as to what was essential travel, for example, often was based on interpretations which provided the unscrupulous with opportunity for special privileges. Within a short time the public responded to the appeal to share rides, organize car pools, and establish pick up points. Even so, there remained lingering doubts as to the necessity of it all. When the *Hartford Courant* noted "the emphasis . . . on the necessity of keeping automobile transportation going," it wondered editorially "whether everything possible has been done to relieve the situation or whether the home front is being used as a guinea pig."¹⁶

War Bonds, Metal Drives, Price Controls

Although Connecticut residents decried compulsory measures, they responded to those appeals to voluntary cooperation which accorded with previously established tenets. Residents of Hartford readily overcame any fear that the pay roll deduction plan for the purchase of war bonds would "revolutionize their trend of thought and practice in business" and subscribed to the method. The purchase of war bonds appealed to the average Yankee's sense of thrift, and industrialists supported the plan as a check on inflation. By the second month of the program, the state exceeded by ten per cent its quota of \$16,500,000 for series E bonds, and exceeded its quota in every war loan drive. Thereafter, by June, 1946, the sale of Series E, F, and G bonds totaled \$1,100,000,000. On the other hand, Connecticut residents did not remain convinced, if they were ever so, of the necessity of the scrap metal drives. Scrap dealers, on the ground that it constituted a form of licensing, refused to distinguish from that material which was useful to the war effort and that which was collected for profit. Farmers warned those who tended to hold scrap for profit of "a little Yankee trait which induces farmers to hold out for higher prices for themselves." Industrial salvage committees were established throughout the state, and household scrap campaigns were conducted. Neither achieved the established quota during the first year. Whereas account of similar collections constitute some of the drama of previous military conflicts, there is little evidence that they served anything other than morale purposes. While industrial scrap was of greater value, the conversion of a flattened tomato can into a B29 required too much gullibility of the practical Yankee.¹⁷

An even broader basis for resistance to government regulations was

provided in the efforts to control prices. When they soared in the first weeks of the war, Congress pushed through authority to regulate them, and the control system was in operation by the Spring of 1942. The effective date of the law was followed by weeks of educating the public and informing the merchants of its intricacies. When a nation wide spot check was made in the Fall it was found that a majority of Connecticut merchants were abiding by the law. However, 29, including Brown Thompson, First National Stores, and Popular Markets were cited for non-compliance. Some testified that the corrections had been made long before the charges appeared in the press and others denied the allegations flatly. Consumers who were willing to pay premium prices for meats and poultry encouraged black market dealings in these products. Some Connecticut farmers did not resist the temptation to sell out-of-state on the black market. As the Easter season approached in 1943, the state was threatened with a shortage of fowl and black market sales increased alarmingly. The OPA cracked down. The most severe penalties assessed were those against a Hartford and a Bridgeport company. The latter was fined \$20,000. Ironically, one of the proprietors of the Hartford company had fled the Nazis only five years previously, and, for making false invoices and demanding cash bonuses from small retailers under threat of cutting off their meat supply, was given a jail sentence. This was later suspended when it was pointed out that others were only fined for similar violations. Such practices aroused the sensibilities of the poultry dealers. In fear that "all would swim in the water" muddled by a few, they formed the Connecticut Live Poultry Association which pledged its support to the eradication of the black market. Members agreed, too, to suspend sales for six days in order to conserve poultry over the holidays.¹⁸

A most critical test of the rationing procedures and of the OPA came in the winter of 1943 when the state suffered one of its most severe winters in years. A bitterly cold January was preceded by a most severe ice storm. As the mercury hovered at sub-normal temperatures, complaints that dealers refused to honor the rationing stamps grew louder. The business ethic ran counter to the public interest. Oil dealers insisted that they must take care of their regular customers while the OPA encouraged them to supply oil to those in need. The fear was compounded by the conflicting statements issued and the tendency of the Governor to act independently of

the Office of Price Administration. When the Governor proposed that the merchants of the state close one day a week, the *Courant* warned that "the American people dislike being pushed around. . . , and nowhere is there more dislike for compulsion than in Connecticut." It suggested that another survey might be necessary before the Governor's proposal was accepted. As the OPA expressed quiet confidence that, under an emergency rationing system adopted February 1, adequate fuel could be supplied, the Governor assumed the role of the hero by informing the public of his frequent appeals to Washington to alleviate the distress. Some oil dealers, unhappily, took advantage of the situation to establish their own rationing system and justified their action by laying at the door of the OPA the charge of inefficiency. A basis for the charge and for the public clamor was existent in the reality that, during the sub-zero month of February, the supply of fuel was touch and go. During the Spring after the crisis had eased, public and private wood lots were opened for those who desired to cut wood to avert a similar difficulty the following year.¹⁹

Labor

New sources of labor were discovered to man the machines of war production. Governor Hurley urged municipal, state, and civil authorities to grant leaves of absences to their employees with special skills in order that they might engage in more essential industries. White collar workers joined the labor force; bank and insurance clerks became a part of the swing shifts. Children from eleven to sixteen years of age became employed in all types of enterprises, the state law to the contrary notwithstanding, over 17,000 students were reported to be engaged in gainful employment in 1943. Many were working six days a week and some as many as sixty or seventy hours. The reluctance of Connecticut industry to employ women workers was overcome as the need for workers increased. Special recruiting campaigns were conducted by Mrs. Ralph Lasbury in cooperation with the U.S. Employment Service. More than 5,000 women workers had been registered by June, 1942. Women were being employed at an ever increasing rate. By February, 1943, the number employed had increased 75 per cent within the previous twelve months to a total of more than 55,000. The ladies not only brought their skills; but their glamour, and the attendant problems. Seventy-two workers walked off the assembly line at Chance

Vought in Bridgeport when the company banned the wearing of sweaters by female employees on the basis that it interfered with production. The Office of War Information supported the company in its stand. After two months, the ladies agreed to wear a two-piece cotton twill and returned to work. As the war progressed, women, children, and white collar workers continued to make significant contributions to the industrial labor force.²⁰

Labor practices were altered to meet the demands of war production. Exceptions to the limitations on the hours of work were granted so frequently that the regulation became practically meaningless. In 1943, the Governor was empowered to extend the maximum hours of work to ten hours a day and 55 hours a week until six months after the cessation of hostilities. The seven-day work week was discontinued shortly after it was introduced by industries engaged in war production. Cornelius J. Danaher, Commissioner of Labor had opposed the practice from the beginning, and it was permitted only on the insistence of Governor Hurley. This experience of working every day, the Commissioner held, proved detrimental to the health and efficiency of the workers. As it became evident that the war was to be of long duration, the work schedule was cut back to six days and women workers were limited to 48 hours a week. Contrary to expectation, however, there was not a marked increase in the amount of industrial home work during the war. In an effort to speed up war production, labor management committees were established throughout industry, not only to settle wage difference, but to consider methods of increasing production as well.²¹

The lengthened work week and the expanded work force did not avert a critical labor shortage at the beginning of 1943. By the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor, the number of workers in representative industries in Hartford, New Haven, and Bridgeport reached 190,000. This was about twice the number employed in September, 1939, and 30,000 greater than at the time of the United States entrance into the war. Particularly acute was the need for skilled and semi-skilled workers in the ball bearing plants of the state which were producing 80 per cent of all the ball bearings produced in the United States. This critical item was in extremely short supply with production falling far short of the needs of the United States and the allied powers. Other critical items included radar, which

was being developed and produced in Connecticut in increasing quantities, and forgings and castings for cannon and heavy equipment. In addition to supplying most of the chucks for machine tools for American industries, state factories were faced in 1943 with supplying chucks for the machines provided allied powers under the lend-lease program. Equally important were the brass industries of Central Connecticut, which produced one-fifth of the nation's brass. The services and the War Production Board continued to press for production and manufacturers were loathe to give up skilled and semi-skilled workers.²²

In an effort to retain the requisite manpower for Connecticut industries, occupational deferments were granted with comparative liberality in the first months of the war. More than five per cent of the state's registrants held occupational deferments by November, 1942. Local boards, acting upon lists of critical industries furnished by higher authority, often were criticized for the deferments which they granted. As the needs of the armed services increased, the restrictions on deferments were tightened. Registrants in non-essential industries were notified to transfer into essential industries or face induction. To provide a more orderly replacement of those engaged in critical industries, at first Manning Tables and then Replacement Schedules were evolved. These were based on the assumption that the critical status of an individual was often in relation to his importance to the particular industry in which he was employed. Many industries, in a desperate effort to retain its manpower, included in its first lists of indispensable men "glorified titles" and others "badly needed." Eventually, a controlled hiring program was established in the central Connecticut area and was later extended to other areas where there were critical labor shortages. Industries were divided into three groups in accordance with the importance of their war effort and the need for labor. Under the plan, no employer was permitted to hire any worker except by authorization of the United States Employment Service. The introduction of tighter controls enabled the state's factories to meet the demands for production as the draft calls continued to drain potential manpower.²³

Despite the shortage of labor, the production schedules were but slightly affected as a result of the differences arising between management and labor. With the beginning of the European War in 1939 indus-

trial disputes rose sharply throughout the country, but those in Connecticut were not considered serious. Of the 74 work stoppages in Connecticut in 1940-41, about one-third were in industries engaged in war work. With the United States entry into the war, there was negotiated between labor and management an agreement which continued throughout the war and provide that differences would be submitted to the State Department of Labor for mediation. Labor leaders pledged labor not to strike until victory was assured. The number of strikes were reduced to 40 in the first year of the war and to 23 in the second. The number of employees involved were reduced from 117,000 in the first year to 53,000 in the second and to 25,000 in the third.²⁴ The conversion of the state's industry from peace time to war time production brought with it Federal assistance and controls through the War Labor Board and its predecessor the National Defense Mediation Board. To an increasing extent, employers turned directly to Washington, knowing that only action by the War Labor Board could *settle their differences* with management, for example in the fiscal year 1942-43, forty-two of the 159 disputes arising were settled by a Federal agency.²⁵ Any notion, however, that the wage stabilization formulas advocated by the Federal Government would necessarily result in a general wage increase was quickly dispelled. In denying a general pay increase to 1,200 Remington Rand employees, Wayne L. Morris, writing the opinion for the War Labor Board, stated "it will not follow as publicized in the press that an application of the formula will result in a huge increase in the nation's wage bill. . . ." The National Association of Manufacturers held that many industries had already granted increases equal to or in excess of that fixed by the war labor formula.²⁶ Whereas labor in general cooperated during the war, patriotism could not completely eliminate all militancy of labor. The United Textile Workers, for example, sought in 1943 to have union membership included in their contract. The next year, the War Labor Board denied the establishment of a Union shop at the Bigelow Sanford Carpet Works. As the war came to an end, organized labor became more active. The first organization of office employees in New England occurred in September, 1944, when those at Bigelow Sanford voted to join the C.I.O.²⁷ The willingness of management and labor alike to subordinate their individual aims to the winning of the war and the necessity of lessening the stoppage of work

created a climate of opinion in which the principles of mediation could operate effectively. This, together with the increasing effectiveness of organized labor, emphasized that "arbitrary hiring and firing was a thing of the past."²⁸

Though the Federal Government continued to extend its powers in all matters concerning war production, the presence of its influence was regarded as an expedient of the emergency and its expansion into other areas was regarded with cautious jealousy. Cornelius Danaher charged in 1942 that the federal social security program was "militantly grasping for the federalization of unemployment compensation." The Federal Government, it was held, had transgressed more and more upon the state, to some extent as the result of legislation, but mainly through an exalted interpretation of authority. In some cases it was agreed that all differences must be forgotten for the duration, but it was hoped that the Federal Government would withdraw its efforts to control unemployment compensation. President Roosevelt promised only a temporary respite with the announcement that he believed that the fund should be federalized, but not at that time. It was both ironic and an expression of the democratic faith that while the whole nation was engaged in a war for survival that Connecticut could call for a "further examination of the principles of American government" if the powers of the central government were further aggrandized. Over the objections of the Connecticut Manufacturers Association, minor adjustments were made in the rate of compensation in 1943 and a greater stability was provided in 1945 when the state was authorized to apply for advances of such funds as might be in the unemployment trust fund maintained under the Federal Social Security Act.²⁹

Wartime Politics

To parallel the state's wariness in regard to the extension of the Federal power, was an equal caution concerning the grant of extraordinary power to the Governor. In what was described as "a dull and spiritless campaign," Baldwin, in November, 1942, with a plurality of 26,196 led the Republican party to the most complete sweep achieved by either party since 1926. Hurley contributed to his defeat, it was said, by his portrayal of himself as a great war governor whose reelection was essential to

the welfare of the people. Yet, Baldwin in his inaugural in 1943 not only dedicated the State to aid "in the speedy prosecution of the war," but also requested that he be granted emergency powers. Although there was adequate precedent for such proposal, it challenged the prerogative of the legislative branch. To avoid arousing latent fears an arrangement, described as a legislative veto, was provided by which any act promulgated by the Governor would be in force only for a limited time and then would lapse if not approved by the legislature. The bill was designed, it was claimed, to enable the state to act with whatever speed was necessary to meet the needs of war, but it aroused a chorus of protests accented by such words as "unnecessary," "unconstitutional," "autocratic," "dictatorial." The Governor was quick to disclaim any desire for any broad grant of legislative power and sought to woo the law makers by asking them to share with him the responsibility for making Connecticut's part in the war effort more effective. The Democrats, after first seeking to exploit the proposal for political advantage, agreed to it. The powers which were ultimately granted, however, including the right to suspend the statutes, were to remain in force until February, 1944. By the time of the Special Session of the General Assembly in January, 1944, at which time the emergency powers were extended, the Governor had used them eight times; and by 1945, eighteen times.³⁰

Despite the emergency, the patronage which accrued to the Republicans with their victory was of consuming interest and became a point of contention between the Republican governor and the Republican assembly. The Republicans "went after all of the jobs in sight." As the Governor sought to wend his way through the patronage muddle, the legislature became impatient and threatened that if the appointments were not made by April 1 legislation would be introduced authorizing the Assembly to make the appointments. The Governor countered with a threat of veto, but left the way open for further consideration. As it became apparent that the Republican Central Committee was making most of the decisions, the Democrats yelled "dictatorship and bossism." The spectacle of Republican Chairman Bradley "moving in and about the Capitol as if it were his business to give orders" was not agreeable to most Republicans, nor to the *Courant* which wrote with plaintive hope, "some day the state central committee . . . will realize that its func-

tion is entirely apart from that of the legislature." The Governor, the *Courant* charged, did not seem to know whether he was supposed to deal with the Central Committee or with the legislature. The lawmakers played particularly fast and loose with the appointments to the minor court judgeships, "even going so far as to replace Republican judges with other Republicans who gave promise of meeting better the requirements of political organization." One would be lacking in critical realism to suppose that the titular head of the party was completely removed from all of these decisions, but the authorization at the Governor's suggestion of a commission to study the judicial system identified him with a proposal ostensibly designed to lessen the evil. The Governor further enhanced his position by his veto of a bill designed to restore civil rights to Harry Mackenzie who had been imprisoned for his involvement in the Waterbury scandals. Clearly, however, the Governor had not taken a firm stand until late in the session.³¹

Nevertheless, in that portion of the legislative calendar and of the politicians' consciousness which was reserved for the public good, there was much which, although not substantial, was suggestive for the future. The appointment of a Commission for post-war planning particularly in regard to construction and improvement of highways was in accord with the anticipated needs of an expanding post-war economy, and the \$1,000 dollar property tax exemption for veterans was a recognition of the services of Connecticut residents during the war. The establishment of an inter-racial commission to work against racial discrimination and the prohibition against discrimination because of color were steps toward the eradication of conditions antithetical to professed tenets of morality. The veto of a bill to commit the mentally retarded to institutions without a court order retained a safeguard that was necessary until the public was educated to the place one who is mentally retarded could take in the community.³²

Manpower

The importance of Connecticut industry in the production of war materials continued to place a heavy burden on Connecticut's manpower. To supplement the labor force, 250,000 workers from other states and 2,500 aliens migrated to Connecticut. Amidst the increased criticism of

industrial deferments and the continuing demands of the military services, John F. Robinson, who had assumed the responsibilities of the State's Selective Service upon the death of Colonel Averill, initiated a replacement schedule designed to maintain the state's industrial efficiency. The first of these replacement schedules, which formed the basis upon which deferments were granted and replacements were supplied, was inaugurated on February 1, 1943. While the plan was generally accepted by industry, it was not inaugurated without some protests being voiced by local boards concerning those prerogatives guaranteed them by the selective service regulations. The more recalcitrant were "compelled to accept" the schedules "in a spirit of cooperation." Occupational deferments for younger men became more difficult to grant as it was they who were to make up the fighting force. Their places were taken to a degree by the return to civilian life of those over 38 and by fathers who were not inducted in Connecticut after October, 1943.³³

Nevertheless there was a noticeable shrinkage in the labor supply. The Commissioner of Labor reported that there were 6,500 fewer people on the job in the summer of 1944 than there had been the previous year. The shrinkage occurred principally in those industries engaged in making machinery. As allied forces established their beachheads on the European continent in 1944 and seemed to be rolling relentlessly toward victory, everyone, the government and the public alike, indulged in careless optimism. The War Manpower Commission of the state in October released women from labor controls in the New Britain and Hartford areas, and the Meriden Manufacturers Association spoke enthusiastically of the tremendous labor reserves which had developed since 1940. Concurrently, there came reports that there was a lag in the production of many of the essentials of war. Alarm was voiced at the report that 55,000 workers had left the state since the first of the year. Then, with the failure of General Patton to break through the Nazi lines, there was a return to the grim realities of war.

The regional manpower director announced that controls over the hiring and firing of labor would be continued for the present. With the depletion of manpower, the climate of opinion against occupational deferments was expressed in suggested work or fight legislation and a closer scrutiny of those classified as physically unfit. Commander Robinson

alerted industry to the manpower situation. It was estimated that 20,000 additional workers would be needed if all the jobs within the state were to be manned. Draft quotas were expected to rise sharply in the Spring of 1945 and industry was asked to review those thirty years of age and over who had been deferred.³⁴

War Time Legislation

The Hartford *Courant's* editorial of October 14, 1944, to the effect that the state political campaign "had not struck political fire" was based on more than the journal's Republican proclivities. Although victory seemed in sight, national issues continued to detract from state problems. Baldwin ran on his record as a war Governor and on a program for the post-war period. The Democrats on the other hand came out their state convention badly divided and the former Governor Hurley seemed to do little more than go through the motions of a campaign. He criticized the Republicans for having abolished the Department of Public Works in 1943, but this failed to excite the imagination of the electorate. A visit by President Roosevelt to the state was not sufficient to rescue Hurley from political defeat, despite the fact that the others on the state Democratic ticket were elected and the Democrats gained control of the Senate. Baldwin's plurality of 43,492 was a measure of his personal popularity.³⁵

The divided legislature resulted in a political imbroglio which began before the inaugural and continued in the courts after the session had adjourned. The Governor's inaugural was delayed five hours as result of disputes over the rules and organization of the Assembly. The Republicans proposed that a separate committee be named to handle the liquor problems previously handled by the Judiciary Committee. Of greater importance, perhaps, was the proposal that a majority vote of either house could force a bill out of committee. The Democrats saw in the bill an effort to force committee action on the Governor's recommendations for appointments. While the inaugural party waited, the issue was resolved when the Democrats agreed to the naming of a liquor committee and the Republicans agreed to omit the "forcing out bill." The tempest was but a prelude to the wrangling which was to characterize the session. The Senate held up executive appointments and five never received Senate confirmation. Lieutenant Governor Snow was caused to take the Senate floor and deny

that he had identified the legislature as “the worst and the lousiest . . . in the history of the state.”³⁶

The wrangling culminated in battles over the appointment of minor judges and the provisions of the operating budget. When the budget was sent to the Senate, the Democratic leadership announced that the \$130,000,000 budget would be slashed drastically. After play-acting as politicians by seeking to place the blame for the proposed budget on the Republicans, agreement was reached on appropriations totaling \$142,227,653. Similar accord was not reached on the appointment of judges of the minor courts. The Democrats, after they had turned down a distribution plan worked out by the Republicans, were accused of having an insatiable desire for jobs. The Democrats, on the other hand, charged that the Republicans had no intention of fulfilling their constitutional duties in the naming of the judges, but were content to let the Governor do it. Hopes rose and fell during the last week of the session that the issue would be resolved, but as the hour for adjournment approached the question remained. The clock in the legislative hall was stopped at 11:03. While the law makers struggled until 4:07 A.M. to bring some order out of chaos and approve the budget, they made no progress on the court appointments. These were left to the Governor. The day after the session ended a Baldwin appointee, Elmer Watson, assumed the position of Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, but John T. McCarthy, the incumbent held that the position was not vacant, employed counsel to defend himself, and later was sustained by the Courts. The *Courant* questioned the value which the legislators attached to representative government; suggested that a powerful executive was preferable to this form of democracy; and concluded its editorial, as had the Secretary of State who had brought the session to a close with, “God Save Connecticut.”

There was passed, nevertheless, some beneficial legislation. A labor relations act had been an objective of organized labor for years. The war powers of the Governor were extended and four bills were enacted concerning the veterans. On the last day of the session, after a bitter debate, the House passed an amendment proposed by Baldwin, which provided that the minor court judges be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.³⁷ In balance, however, political bickering had interfered with the orderly progression of the legislative process.

Victory

The news of Hiroshima was followed by a week of expectancy and then with jubilation over the knowledge of the formal surrender of Japan. Parties, formal and informal, public and private, followed as Connecticut residents looked hopefully to the future. Families arranged receptions to welcome members home, as almost every day brought news of ships' arrival in New York with large contingents of Connecticut men. The *Hartford Courant*, while not discounting the importance of the atomic bomb in hastening the conclusion of the war, pointed to its great potential as a source of power for peace-time purposes. The state's draft schedule was cut 65 per cent and plans were announced to speed the return of soldiers to civilian life. The intensive naval educational programs at Trinity and Wesleyan were terminated. There was an almost immediate end to rationing of gasoline and oil, and "fil'er-up" returned to common usage. As cars flooded the highways, Governor Baldwin took the precautionary measure to announce that the state's speed limit of forty miles per hour would be strictly enforced. Connecticut residents, like all Americans, rushed to return to "normalcy," but to find that society had been altered in a thousand little ways: milk, for example, continued to be delivered on alternate days and there was no reversal of the trend to less and less postal service at a higher and higher rate of cost. Though strong ties were to remain with the past, in the larger areas of public affairs there was visible the emergence of a new Connecticut.³⁸

Connecticut had made impressive contributions to the winning of the war. More than 210,000 of her men saw service: 135,000 inductees and 75,000 volunteers. There were, in addition, more than 3,300 women from Connecticut in the armed forces. Connecticut residents were among the numbers at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941; aboard the *Missouri*, August 14, 1945, when Japan surrendered; and engaged in the land, sea, and air battles at points in between. They were among those who retreated before Rommel in North Africa and those who launched the counter attack which ended in the invasion of Italy. They waded ashore at Normandy and pursued the enemy on the continent. There were plain GI's and heroes, nine receiving the Congressional Medal of Honor. There were more than 6,000 casualties sustained in performing deeds of duty and of valor. To

supply the materials of war, over a half million persons, including temporary residents, manned the factories at their highest point of production. Labor and management cooperated, with the assistance of the State and Federal agencies, to prevent serious work stoppages. More than eight billions of war contracts were placed in the state through May, 1945. Over half of these were for aircraft; almost one fourth, for ordnance; and the remainder, for ships, communication equipment, and multifarious other articles of war. One hundred and seventy-five Connecticut industries received the Army-Navy E award, twice as many as the average number of recipients in other states of the nation. Additional recognition was extended 448 times for the continuation of outstanding work. All who remained at home did not accept the controls imposed on the civilian population. Others grumbled, but accepted them. For the vast majority, however, the war was their war, and they did their bit to see it to a successful conclusion, while a large segment of the state's population was actively engaged in a fight for freedom, those at home had continued to extend and to alter democratic institutions.³⁹

NOTES — CHAPTER XXXIII

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2. *Ibid.*, June 8, 10, 1939; Report of the Commissioner of Labor (*Hartford*, 1939), pp. 49-50; Mitchell, "Social Legislation in Connecticut," pp. 479-84.
3. *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 19, June 8, 1939; Governor's Message (*Hartford*, 1935), p. 5.
4. *Hartford Courant*, May 10, 25, 27, 31, June 13, 1939.
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6. *Connecticut Industry*, XVIII, July, 1940, p. 1; *Hartford Courant*, May 6, June 8, 1939, Sept., 7, 15, 20, Nov. 18, 1940, Jan. 7, 20, Feb. 19, 1943.
7. *Connecticut Industry*, XIX, August, 1941, p. 20; John F. Robinson, "Selective Service in Connecticut, World War II," (typescript, 1946, made available by the author), pp. 5-28; *Hartford Courant*, Sept., 3, 4, 15, 17, 24, 1940.
8. *Ibid.*, May 24, 1939, Sept. 4, 10, 21, 29, Nov. 1, 19, 1940.
9. *Ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1940, Jan. 15, 1941; John S. McNamara, "A Boom Town Faces Its Future," *American Mercury*, LII, May, 1941, p. 578; *Connecticut Industry*, XVIII, April, 1940, p. 13, XIX, Jan., 1941, p. 14; "In Bridgeport's War Factories," *Fortune*, XXIV, Sept., 1941, p. 87.

10. *Ibid.*; Will Chasen, "Wooden Nutmeg of Socialism," *Nation*, CLIII, Sept. 27, 1941, p. 278; McNamara, "A Boom Town," p. 578; *New Republic*, CIV, Feb., 3, 1941, p. 145.
11. *Hartford Courant*, May 7, 1939, Sept. 7, 10, 11, Nov. 1, 20, 24, 1940, Dec. 5, 1941; *Connecticut Industry*, XVIII, June, 1940, p. 9; "In Bridgeport's War Factories," p. 87; Chasen, "Wooden Nutmeg of Socialism," p. 278; McNamara, "A Boom Town," p. 578; *New Republic*, CIV, Feb. 3, 1941, p. 145.
12. *Hartford Courant*, Dec. 13, 17, 1941, Jan. 30, 1942; *Connecticut Industry*, XX, Oct. 1942, p. 26, Nov. 1942, p. 25.
13. Robinson, "Selective Service in Connecticut," p. 63; *Hartford Courant*, Dec. 7 - 24, 1941.
14. *Connecticut Industry*, XIX, Dec., 1941, p. 27, Feb., 1942, p. 20, May, 1942, p. 20, June, 1942, p. 12, July, 1942, p. 19, August, 1942, p. 20, April, 1943, p. 8; Ewing, "History of the Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Company," pps. 216-19.
15. *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 23, 24, 1942.
16. *Ibid.*, Dec. 12, 13, 19, 1941, Jan. 2, 4, 12, 28, 31, Nov. 15, 1942, Jan. 9, 1943; *Connecticut Industry*, XX, Feb. 1942, p. 20, Apr. 1942, p. 4, May, 1942 p. 22; Elizabeth Donahue, "Chester Bowles in Politics," *New Republic*, CXV, Aug. 12, 1946, p. 172.
17. *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 20, Nov. 9, 15-21, 28, 1942, Jan. 3, 1943; *Connecticut Industry*, XX, June, 1942, p. 12, Oct., 1942, p. 29, Nov. 1942, p. 66, Dec. 1942, p. 17, Feb. 1, 1943, p. 19, Aug., 1943, p. 6; "Annual Report of the State of the Finances," 1946 (Washington, 1947), pp. 516, 528-31.
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19. *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 9, 14, Feb. 1, 3, 16, 17, 25, 28, May 12, 1943; *Connecticut Industry*, XXI, Jan. 1943, p. 20, Feb. 1943, p. 6, Apr. 1943, p. 24.
20. *Hartford Courant*, Dec. 3, 1941, Jan. 10, 31, Nov. 9, 1942, Jan. 3, Feb. 2, Apr. 14, 1943; *Connecticut Industry*, XX & XXI, March, 1942, p. 22, Dec. 1942, p. 19, May, 1943, p. 8, June, 1942, p. 2, Mar. 1943, p. 6; Report of the Department of Labor, 1943 (Hartford, 1943), p. 19.
21. *Connecticut Industry*, XIX & XX, Oct. 1941, p. 26, Aug. 1942, p. 20, June 1942, p. 4, Nov. 1942, p. 59, Report of the Department of Labor, 1943, p. 14, 1945, p. 11; *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 11, 1942.
22. Robinson, "Selective Service in Connecticut," pp. 72-109.
23. *Ibid.*, *Industrial Mobilization for War: History of the War Production Board and Predecessor Agencies*, 1940-45, I (Washington, 1947), pp., 705-706; *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 24, Feb. 5, Apr. 23, 1943.
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25. Annual Report of the Department of Labor, 1942-43 (Hartford 1943) p. 24; *Connecticut Industry*, XX, Feb. 1942, p. 9.

26. *Ibid.*, Sept. 1942, p.
27. Ewing, "History of the Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Company," pp. 197-222.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 222.
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30. *Ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1942, Jan. 3, 7, 13, 1943, Jan. 27, 29, 1944.
31. *Ibid.*, Jan. 3, Apr. 21, 22, May 21, 1943.
32. *Ibid.*, Jan. 3, May 6, 11, 12, 21, 23.
33. *Connecticut Industry*, XXI, Jan. 1943, p. 16, XXIII, Mar. 1945; Robinson, "Selective Service in Connecticut," pp. 72-158.
34. *Ibid.*; Annual Report of the Department of Labor (Hartford, 1944), p. 21; (1945), p. 12; *Hartford Courant*, Oct. 5, Nov. 7, 1944.
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36. *Ibid.*, Jan. 3, 4, June 2, 3, 5, 8, 1945.
37. *Ibid.*, June 6, 8, 1945.
38. *Ibid.*, Aug. 1-31, 1945.
39. *Ibid.*, Aug. 1, 1945, *Connecticut Industry*, XXIV, Mar., 1946, p. 8, Apr., 1946, p. 18.

Chapter XXXIV

Connecticut After the War

THE YEARS immediately following the war were years of adjustment, but not of a general reordering of society. The economy languished. Industry took stock, sought to extricate itself from government controls and to fashion a more favorable economic climate. Labor attempted to consolidate its gains of the last decade and resorted to the strike in its efforts to enforce its demands. Rather than suggesting an awareness of the new demands being made upon society, the legislation enacted, such as aid to education and the introduction of the sales tax, represented the resolution of issues which for many years had been of public concern. However, as the veteran took his place in Connecticut society, there was introduced what was regarded as a model program for his retraining and reemployment. In concept and extent a beginning was made in the solution of the housing problem. In the area of personal liberties the Negro capitalized upon the awareness of his political significance and secured greater employment opportunities and was extended greater personal privileges. A challenge to this slow, studied approach to the solution of public issues was made by the Democratic Party in 1948 in the person of Chester Bowles.

Return of Veterans

By August, 1945, 34,000 veterans from Connecticut had been discharged. Local and state agencies had been directed, oriented, and trained to offer assistance to these returning veterans. Problems which could not be solved on a local level then devolved upon state agencies, but the primary responsibility was defined as resting with local agencies. On the local level, selective service boards, to which veterans were required to

report upon return, worked closely with the local reemployment committees. Most of the veterans who wished to return to their former positions found that employers welcomed them. Where problems arose in regaining positions, local reemployment committees were successful in resolving 75 per cent of the difficulties. Those not resolved were referred to the next highest authority until, as a last resort, veterans could avail themselves of the services of the United States Attorney. His services had been enlisted in only one case by March, 1946. To assist a veteran in making those adjustments necessary to holding the job to which he had returned, veterans' counsellors were established in most of the principal industries. Those veterans who desired an employment other than that held when they entered service were referred to such agencies as the Civil Service Commission and the State Employment Service.¹ This close cooperation between local, state, and federal authorities was so successful that in February, 1946, the Federal administrative agency responsible for the retraining and the reemployment of veterans suggested that this "Connecticut Plan" be adopted throughout the country. It was reported that it was cited by President Truman as "one of the model veterans plans of the nation."²

In addition, provisions were made for health and medical assistance and for educational opportunities for veterans and aid to their dependents. All veterans who suffered disabilities during the war were entitled to enter the State Veterans' Hospital or one designated by it. Each dependent wife, husband, or widowed mother was eligible for ten dollars in assistance each week from the State; and each child under sixteen, for six dollars. In addition, a \$1,000, deduction was allowed on taxes assessed on real property owned by veterans. They were given preference at the University of Connecticut and at the state colleges, and vocational schools extended their services for their benefit. Under the GI Bill, more than 91,000 veterans were assisted in the educational institutions in Connecticut. War experience was accepted in many cases as the equivalent of a high school diploma and in other cases an equivalency certificate was granted after intensified courses of instruction.³

Although the provision for housing for veterans was far from adequate, it was of great benefit. In response to the demands of the veterans, the Assembly had convened in special session in the spring of 1946 and had

provided for the state to assume 50 per cent of the expenses incurred since December 31, 1945, and to be incurred by any municipality in establishing any temporary housing project for veterans. As of June 30, 1948, \$3,142,579 of the \$4,000,000 appropriated had been granted. Two thousand and twenty-one housing units had been completed in 20 Connecticut communities. More than 60 per cent of these had been erected in the cities of New Britain, New Haven, Hartford, Stamford, and Waterbury. These houses provided housing for many returning veterans who otherwise would have been without shelter.⁴

Reconversion and Readjustment

At the war's end, Connecticut industry took stock and then moved with a rush to convert factories to peace-time production. The Winchester Arms Company was a model for the state, accomplishing its conversion within two weeks after VJ day. By early October this company had 5,500 employees on its payroll as compared with 3,600 before the war. The government assisted some companies, such as Bigelow, to ease the conversion to peace time production. In this company blanket production was continued on a diminishing basis until November, and the production of other defense materials was cut on a most gradual basis. With this assistance, the company was able to move without interruption to the production of consumer goods. The big brass factories in and around Waterbury, however, closed the manufacturing divisions to take inventory, and the United Time Corporation sent 2,000 of its 4,000 workers home and gave 15 and 30 day notices to another 400. The greatest uncertainty surrounded the aircraft plants whose expansion was geared almost entirely to the defense effort. A survey of 15 of Connecticut's industrial centers in the early part of October revealed a general spirit of optimism. Reconversion was practically complete in some, and in most it was expected to be completed by the end of the year. By October, the Underwood Corporation of Hartford and Landers, Frary, and Clark of New Britain were at about one-third pre-war capacity; and the A. C. Gilbert Company promised toys by Christmas, but not enough to meet the demands. There were some companies, such as the Yale and Towne Manufacturing Company, which were facing serious labor shortages. It was expected that this would be resolved and that employment would be far above pre-war levels.⁵

The availability of surplus property offered a tremendous benefit to the future expansion of Connecticut industry. An opportunity to replace obsolete with new machines or to acquire supplementary machinery at discount prices was one that enterprising industrialists readily understood. War contracts provided that the surplus machine tools should be removed as quickly as possible, at most within 60 days after the cessation of hostilities. Unhappily a great deal of time was lost because of the inability of the Surplus War Property Board to find men with sufficient background to dispose of the property. In the meantime, industries which wished to take advantage of the expected consumer market had to retool with maximum speed. Too frequently, then, machines used during the war were moved into unsheltered or poorly protected areas to deteriorate. Also many industries could not take advantage of the opportunity, because their available capital was needed to reconvert. The total amount, or the dollar volume, of the surplus machines acquired by Connecticut industry is difficult to determine, but it is almost certain that surplus machines played a significant part in the retooling and/or in the expansion of Connecticut industry, although Connecticut manufacturers did not show an eagerness to acquire surplus factories. Half of the 16 plants available in Connecticut had been disposed of by July, 1946. Of these, four had been purchased by their occupants and two by out-of-state concerns. Of those available, three were in New Britain, two in Hartford, and one each in New Haven, Southington, and Bristol, and varied in floor space from 17,000 to 650,000 square feet.⁶

The readjustment of industry to peacetime production was accompanied by a sharp rise in unemployment as had been expected. There had been a gradual decrease of those engaged in non-agricultural pursuits since June, 1943. By VJ day it was 17.6 per cent less than the high of 805,800. This decrease apparently had been absorbed for the most part in other gainful employment and by the calls for military service, for unemployment remained at about 3,600 until after the armistice in Europe. That 93.8 per cent of the decrease of 141,900 was in the field of manufacturing meant that industry could not begin to absorb the returning servicemen until it could return to peacetime production. In spite of the steps taken to cushion the problem of unemployment through the testing and counseling and other services offered under the Connecticut Plan to assist return-

ing veterans, through employment assistance to displaced workers and school graduates, the impact of the end of the war on the labor market was dramatic. With the armistice in Europe, unemployment doubled. Immediately after VJ day, Paul McNutt identified Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, Meriden, and New London as areas where unemployment most likely would prevail, but he did not expect it to reach critical proportions. As 12,000 applied for jobless pay during the month of August, armories throughout the state were taken over for the registration of the unemployed. Their number increased to 63,500 in September and it was not until the Spring of 1946 that a gradual decline began. Connecticut labor was unsettled in the first months of peace and there were communities where there were workers and no jobs, and others where there was employment and no takers. Industry itself contributed to the unemployment, not only by its handling of the problems of conversion, but in some cases by refusing to return to production until the approval of the OPA for price schedules which in the words of CMA would enable industry "to break even or even make a modest profit." Unemployment, was inextricably interwoven with the problems of prices and wages and any general relief would result from the general adjustment of the economy.⁷

Organized labor made an effort to secure wages at war time levels and in accord with the increase in the cost of living. It was generally agreed that the cost of living during the war had risen approximately 30 per cent, but the determination of the increase of wages during the same period was made difficult by the overtime pay. It was estimated that, including the latter, the gross income for labor had increased more than fifty per cent and when overtime wages were excluded the increase was estimated at 30 to 40 per cent. Most laborers had adjusted their daily living to accord with this higher income. During the reconversion period, labor not only lost overtime and bonus payments, but worked shorter hours. The Connecticut C.I.O. demanded a wage increase of 50 per cent and the maintenance of existent retail prices. Management held that it could not grant the wages without an increase in prices, which were still prohibited in many cases by governing regulations. The Connecticut Manufacturers Association held in January, 1946, that a 30 per cent increase in wages would result in a 100 per cent shutdown of 68 per cent of the plants. Labor leaders expressed their displeasure at the attitude of gov-

ernment as well as of management since VJ Day, and requested that Governor Baldwin call a special session of the General Assembly in an effort to resolve the wage dilemma. Baldwin refused on the ground that it would be fruitless to do so until the United States Congress had taken action to control prices. To assist in the resolution of the problems of labor and management the Governor appointed a labor-management council with wide representation from both groups.⁸

In the absence of any general agreement, organized labor turned more and more to the strike as a method of gaining its objectives. Somewhat in anticipation of the growing unrest of labor, the Reverend Russel J. Clinchy of the Center Church in Hartford, a former member of the United States Conciliation Service, pled for what he called a democratic liberalism which would recognize both the rights of labor and of management. Though the Reverend was widely quoted by proprietors his tenets did not advance beyond those of the nineteenth century. To labor, the situation was something more than an academic exercise in patience. Strikes increased during 1946. Four new strikes were begun each month, with the average number of workers out on strikes reaching 15,279. This represented a loss of over 2,000,000 man hours each month and constituted a loss of two per cent of the estimated work time as compared to a national average of 1.4 per cent. A. C. Fuller of the Connecticut Manufacturers Association lamented the discard of the smoothly functioning machinery which had achieved cooperation in the war period and lashed out at those "who blindly demand 'the last pound of flesh' to satisfy their own lust for power." He charged that "the noose was being pulled tighter and tighter, with every work stoppage, around the way of life for which we have fought two wars in a generation." New Deal labor laws, and particularly their anti-injunction provisions, came under attack. It was "about time," wrote the Secretary of the Connecticut Manufacturers Association "that someone in Government began a real campaign for legislation which will stem the vicious spiral of labor disturbances. . . ." In an effort to reduce the danger of strikes and to retain workers necessary to take advantage of the growing market for consumer goods, some companies, such as Bigelow, sought to extend the program of increased wages and better working conditions which had been initiated during the war. In general, however, wage increases were granted grudgingly as management sought to exert its influ-

ence to alter legislation and administrative practices which would permit the increase of prices.⁹

The drive "to take the government out of business" culminated in the failure to extend effective price controls beyond June 30, 1946. They came to be regarded as antithetical to the Yankee concept of free enterprise and became increasingly difficult to enforce during the last months of the war. Simultaneously with the news of victory over Japan came the announcement that government was to get out of business. Moral persuasion to prevent "excessive stock piling, preemptive buying, or the hoarding of scarce materials" failed, and by the beginning of 1946, President Truman recognized that inflation was the greatest immediate danger of the period. The creation of the Office of Economic Stabilization early in the year was interpreted by the Connecticut Manufacturers Association as nothing more than the failure of the OPA and the necessity of working out a more workable wage-price relationship. Chester Bowles, who had expressed a fear of spiraling prices in the post-war era, was made director of the new office and caught the imagination of the American people in his campaign on the dangers of inflation. The Manufacturers feared that they had come to look upon any adjustment of prices as contributing to inflation. The legislative battle lines were drawn and the trend was running against a "managed economy." The price control bill passed by Congress was so full of holes that Chester Bowles resigned his position.¹⁰

The First Post-war Election

In Connecticut's first post-war election, a new generation of Democratic politicians appeared on the scene to challenge the position of the veterans. Nevertheless, Chester Bowles, who had administered the price control program in Connecticut and who had resigned in protest from the Office of Economic Stabilization when Congress passed a watered-down price control bill, was preparing to bid for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination and state leadership. This challenged Brian McMahon's control of the Democratic party in the State. Bowles had the support of John McGuire of Wallingford and John Golden of New Haven. In the first week of September, an atmosphere of uncertainty surrounded his candidacy. Then, approximately a week before the Democratic state convention,

encouraged no doubt by a public opinion poll which showed him far in the lead and by the avowed neutrality of Brian McMahon, Bowles announced he would actively seek the nomination. Another possible candidate was Thomas J. Dodd, who had served from 1938 to 1945 in the Federal Department of Justice and had gained a block of supporters while serving as Chief Trial Counsel in the Nuremberg trials. Bowles' chief opponent, however, was Lieutenant Governor Snow, "a picturesque and pleasant poet from Wesleyan," who was supported by a group including Raymond Thatcher, Katherine Quinn, John Bailey, and John Tynan. These compensated for Snow's lack of political sophistication. It perhaps would be incorrect to say that Bowles was knifed by McMahon: it was enough for him to stand idly by and watch others do the work. They did it well. Snow gained such a commanding lead on the first ballot that others joined the band wagon. Bowles withdrew from the contest and moved Snow's nomination by acclamation. A writer for a national magazine observed that "party bosses do not always play to win, and this was one of the occasions when defeat was figured to be more profitable than victory." To lose the election, it was explained, might mean the temporary loss of the patronage; to win it with a man like Bowles might mean to lose it permanently. New alliances in Democratic politics were forming, which with some alterations were to dominate the Party for the next fifteen years.¹¹

The Republicans gained a smashing victory in 1946 with tested political leaders. Governor Baldwin had been prevailed upon to make the Senate race, and as titular head of the Party exerted a powerful influence in the determination of the nominee for Governor. The Party organization gave its support to James L. McConaughy, who was described by his detractors as "a cold and reactionary don." He had been President of Wesleyan from 1925 to 1943, during the war had headed China Relief and had served in the Office of Strategic Services. On the eve of the balloting, Joseph Talbot, who had promised to take his fight for the nomination to the convention floor, withdrew and subsequently refused the nomination for Congressman from the Fifth District, because, he stated, he could not "in conscience, run with and become a part of a ticket that is the product of a one-man convention." Neither the party rift, nor the allegation that Baldwin had received a salary of \$10,000 a year from the Connecticut Mutual Insur-

ance Company while Governor, stemmed the Republican tide. Baldwin had been remarkably successful during his administration in retaining the confidence of industry while doing much to destroy the image of the Republican party as an enemy of labor. It was acknowledged that, if the Democrats were to win, they would have to receive the solid support of the liberal elements of labor. Yet, the party had turned its back on the liberals preference for the nomination. Political allegiances of all elements of the population were reforming in the post-war years, and whether labor could have assured a Democratic victory remains a point of conjecture. As Snow observed, "the tide was running against the New Deal," and the Connecticut electorate did nothing to stem its force. Baldwin and McConaughy, each with pluralities of approximately 100,000, led the Republicans to a victory which enabled them to win all the Congressional seats, elect a complete state ticket, and elect majorities to both houses of the General Assembly.¹²

More Adjustments

The Republican legislature responded to the suggestions of the Governor with programs of general benefit to the citizenry and of special benefit to the veterans. Group life insurance was inaugurated for state employees and additional workmen's unemployment benefits and old age benefits were granted. For those veterans who had resided in the state at least one year immediately preceding induction, a bonus of ten dollars a month was authorized for each month of service between December 7, 1941, and December 3, 1945, provided that no payment was to be less than \$30 nor more than \$300. In the first year, the state disbursed approximately \$50,000,000. Also, in view of the experiences since World War II, there was authorized what must be regarded as a liberal alteration in the Soldiers, Sailors, and Marine Fund. The limit of the fund was raised to \$25,000,000 and that portion of the cigarette tax earmarked for the fund netted added from two and one-half to three million to the fund each year until 1955. With other income the total in the fund then approached \$25,000,000. The limit was then again raised to \$35,000,000 although the amount earmarked from the cigarette tax was reduced to approximately \$1,250,000 each year. In the meantime, except for recession years, the dis-

bursements for relief generally were below \$500,000 annually. As expected, the disbursements increased in the latter years of the decade, but the fund was then in such a financial condition that the receipts from interest on investments were almost sufficient to pay for the necessary disbursements. The attitude was developing among some members of the state administration in 1961 that the fund should be frozen at \$35,000,000 and the monies earmarked for it diverted to other tax purposes.¹³

In response to the demands of real estate groups, the Assembly hastened the removal of economic controls and perhaps by this increased inflation. Rent control boards were to be established in each of Connecticut's cities which were authorized to adjust the maximum charged for rent upwards, but not to exceed 15 per cent in excess of the maximum in effect on the last day of federal rent controls. When it could be demonstrated that there was adequate housing in the city, the rent controls could be eliminated.¹⁴

An opportunity for the electorate to determine further reorganization and procedure of government was assured by referring to the people for final approval the provisions establishing a four year term for the Governor and for the Probate Judges, arranging for minor court judges to be nominated by the governor and confirmed by both houses, and permitting the Assembly to determine the methods by which forfeited rights should be restored.¹⁵

Birth Control

Despite the changes which had come to Connecticut society during the depression and the war years, there had been no alteration in the statutory prohibition of the practice of birth control. In the two decades of controversy, Protestant and Jewish clergy and physicians had joined other proponents of birth control who had shifted their position from demanding a repeal of the prohibition to permissive legislation which would enable a physician to prescribe contraceptives, devices, or drugs when it was believed that pregnancy would endanger life. The opposition to birth control was marked by the continued militancy of the Catholic Church and was reinforced by decisions of the state's highest court. The State Supreme Court of Errors in 1940 reversed by a 3 to 2 vote the decision of

the State Superior Court which had held in favor of three defendants charged with unlawfully prescribing contraceptives to patients. The State Supreme Court reaffirmed its position in a test case in 1943 involving two patients of a doctor of the Yale University School of Medicine. The Court held that the law was not unconstitutional, that it was not a denial of natural rights and privileges, that the General Assembly was not precluded from considering those issues desirable in the interest of morality, and that the failures of the General Assembly to reject the law was "proof that the legislature had no intention of excepting physicians from the law." The court's position was that any change would have to come from the Assembly.¹⁶

The divisive effects of the issue on Connecticut society reached their greatest intensity in the 1947 session of the General Assembly. The leading role was played by a "Committee of One Hundred" physicians. At the request of the committee, Representative John D. Alsop introduced a "doctors' and health" bill which he described at the public hearing simply as a health measure. Led by Dr. Herbert Thoms, a Professor of the Yale University School of Medicine, ten prominent physicians representing the fields of psychiatry, pediatrics, gynecology, and obstetrics, stressed the medical advantages of the bill. Only one physician Dr. Lewis James, an attendant physician of the St. Francis Hospital, spoke against the bill, and he did not stress medical arguments. Six physicians of Catholic hospitals defied warnings and spoke in favor of the bill. Epitomizing the opinions of the speakers against the bill was the statement "that all the statistics you have heard this afternoon just becloud the issue and confuse the matter. It's contrary to the law of God. That is reason enough and answer enough." Repercussions followed the public hearings. The *Hartford Courant*, for the first time voicing its opinion on the issue, vigorously supported the stand taken by the majority of Connecticut's physicians. The Catholic physicians who had spoken in favor of the measure were dismissed from the Catholic hospitals. The state's Medical Society reaffirmed its support of birth control by contraception. The Hartford Association of Congregational Churches issued a formal statement declaring "that no hospital which limits the right of free speech of staff members in regard to their conviction on medical matters such as birth control, should be eligible to receive financial support from either the public treasury or from funds received from gen-

eral subscription." There was little of a substantive nature which could be added in 1947 to the debates of a quarter of a century. The House passed the bill by a rising vote, but the Senate after a series of fiery exchanges, rejected the bill by a voice vote.¹⁷

Hopelessly bills were introduced each session, and public hearings held as an empty formality. Legislators, Catholic and non-Catholic, could count the number of Catholic voters and estimate the hard core of their militant conformity to priestly instruction. There was more than incidental importance, perhaps, in the observation that in 1947 there were "600,000 Catholics in the state and we . . . demand our representation." That the Catholics were exercising a determining force in Connecticut politics was dramatically demonstrated in the 1957 session of the Assembly on the issue of providing transportation at public expense for students attending private schools. Also, in 1961, in his quest for the gubernatorial nomination of the Republican Party, John Alsop sought to minimize his connection with the issue by reminding the citizenry that he had submitted the "doctors and health" bill only "on request." In 1961 proponents of birth control once again turned to the courts to secure those permissive rights denied them by Connecticut statute. A case was taken by a doctor and his patient to the Supreme Court of the United States. The Court, however, refused to rule on the case on the ground that there was no evidence that the law was enforced, despite the fact that the existent law had served as a deterrent to the establishment of clinics for the propagation of information on birth control. The subsequent establishment of a planned parenthood clinic in New Haven resulted in the arrest of those responsible. Their subsequent conviction of violations of state statutes has been appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States.¹⁸

State Aid to Education

The provision for state aid for elementary and secondary education was the culmination of two decades of controversy. Beginning in 1927, seven successive sessions of the General Assembly rejected plans for the state to participate in the financing of public education below the college level. Support was gained for the idea in 1939 by the doubtful expedient of identifying the primary purpose of the bill as relief from the alleged

excessive burden of the property tax. The proposal was defeated, however because of the inability to agree on whether the plan should be financed by a sales or an income tax. The number enrolled in public schools had actually decreased from 310,000 in 1939 to 289,000 in 1947, but the increase in birth rates during the period emphasized the need for increased educational opportunities in the future. Then, too, the possibility of shifting a portion of the tax for education from the property tax was almost irresistible. The dominance of the small towns in the Connecticut General Assembly was evident in the educational aid program enacted in 1947. By a sliding scale arrangement, school districts with an average daily attendance of less than one hundred, for example, were to receive \$110 per pupil, those with an average daily attendance of 750 were to receive \$90 per pupil, but those with an average daily attendance above that figure, which included all the more urban areas, were to receive only \$30 for each additional pupil.

The bill did tend to equalize educational opportunities. Inasmuch as no effort was made to equalize the method of assessment in arriving at the grand list, there was little relation between the amount received and the ability to pay. The legislation did insure the continuation then of small towns as educational units. As a result of the legislation the towns received from the state in 1947-48, \$11,000,000, or approximately 22 per cent of the total expended for public education, as compared to \$3,500,000 the previous year, or 8.5% of the total expended. As the public school enrollment reached 380,000 and as the total cost of public education in the state increased to \$101,000,000 by 1955, the state proportion decreased to less than 15 per cent. In that year the first important supplement was made to the state aid formula. Twenty-one dollars was added to the basic grant thereby continuing the scale favorable to the small towns, but not increasing the margin. An additional grant of \$9.50 in 1957 eased the problems of continually mounting school costs. As the public school enrollments exceeded 450,000 and total expenditures exceeded \$150,000,000, concern developed that some of the school districts were not providing locally monies for education in accordance with their ability to pay. Therefore a uniform effort was called for by the Commissioner of Education. The Assembly, however, in 1961, chose, to continue the established plan presumably while a basis for equalization of the tax effort was studied.

The aid was modified to increase to \$161 for the first hundred pupils in average daily attendance and to decrease proportionately until \$111 was provided for the sixth hundredth students and \$96 dollars for each hundred additional students.¹⁹

Minority Rights

The efforts in Connecticut to apply the democratic ideals implicit in a world conflict for the freedom of people revealed a dichotomy in theory and practice in the treatment of minority groups usually associated with other regions and, at one and the same time, the necessity and limitations of legal provisions. The Fair Employment legislation enacted in Connecticut in 1947 gave force to the Inter-Racial Commission established in 1943. The proposals brought forth predictions of dire results such as walk-outs, demonstrations, and loss of patronage to those establishments which would permit the employment of minority groups on an equal basis with other elements of the population. In atmosphere of emotion, the Fair Employment Act was passed and provided that it shall be unfair "for an employer . . . because of the race, color, religious creed, national origin or ancestry of any individual, to refuse to hire or employ or to bar or to discharge from employment such individual or to discriminate against him in compensation or in terms, conditions, or privileges of employment." The purpose of the act, as defined by the Inter-Racial Commission which was to administer it, was to provide qualified persons equal opportunities for employment. Nevertheless, the act was interpreted by the President of the Connecticut Manufacturers Association as "little less than a slap in the face to industry." The threat of legal reprisal, it was held, would simply open the door to troublemakers. The personnel of the Inter-Racial Commission, it was charged, was itself discriminatory. There was a common area of agreement, however, between these views and those of the proponents of the legislation, that is, that education was necessary to the achievement of the objectives. The Inter-Racial Commission believed that "legal sanctions . . . are necessary to complement its efforts in meeting situations where recalcitrance and disregard for the law are patent."²⁰

Steady progress was made in achieving greater employment opportunities for minority groups during the next decade, but the opportunities in the higher paying jobs were limited. The almost immediate voluntary

compliance was the most significant development in the first year the act was in force. The Southern New England Telephone Company employed Negroes as telephone operators for the first time, several towns employed Negro school teachers, insurance companies began using them as office workers, and establishments throughout the state added them to their sales force. Nevertheless, discrimination was found in two out of every three cases submitted to the Commission. Connecticut, by its decision in 1949, was the first of the states to prohibit the exclusion of the Negro from the National Guard, and by 1952 discrimination was eliminated in Connecticut's Organized Reserve. The safeguarding of employment rights entered a new phase in 1952. Thereafter emphasis was no longer on merely securing a position, but on securing one in accordance with aptitude and ability. Although employers were loathe to upgrade Negro employees, by the middle of the decade the major concern of the Inter-Racial Commission shifted to discrimination in housing.²¹

The protection of minority rights was furthered through the extension of the Public Accommodations Act first passed in 1905 and amended in 1949 to include housing. With Hartford and New Haven leading the way, marked progress was made in breaking down the barriers to minority groups in public housing, but as late as 1954 "segregation patterns" were found in 40 per cent of the public housing projects with no pattern evident in 20 per cent of the cases. It was learned that it was difficult to break down patterns once established. In the projects established since 1949, integration was relatively easier. In activities not covered by the law, such as private schools, it was learned that discrimination took on more subtle forms through the use of gentlemen's agreements, quota systems, and token placements. Summer resorts were identified in 1951 as the chief violators of the law, and the next year it was learned that 90 per cent of the convalescent homes and homes for the aged would not admit Negroes. Such practices were less frequent after the strengthening of the law to include all types of establishments which offered goods or services to the public. The extension of the principles to private housing was slowed because relatively few of the Negroes by the mid-fifties could afford homes in middle class neighborhoods. Only one third of those who purchased homes paid more than \$15,000. As late as 1957-58 some families were spending more than half of their earnings for shelters and living in condi-

tions dangerous to the health of all who lived there. Some landlords it was reported charged a "finders fee" of from \$25 to \$125. There remained neighborhoods in New Haven and Hartford which were almost totally Negro. The enrollment of one school in New Haven was 90 per cent Negro; and of two schools in Hartford, 75 per cent.²²

By the end of the decade, there prevailed a discrepancy between public morality and private practice. Redevelopment projects focused further attention on the problems of Negro housing. Inasmuch as in many instances the inhabitants of the less desirable residential areas were Negroes, they frequently were the ones who were forced by redevelopment to move. To assist in alleviating the difficulties, the Public Accommodations Act was strengthened and citizen's committees supplemented public efforts to secure adequate housing for the displaced. In Hartford the force of public opinions was directed against those who charged excessive rents in those areas where Negro population was most dense. Even so, the time had not yet come when Negroes could purchase homes from real estate agents or directly from owners without, in the opinion of Negroes, experiencing unpleasantness. Yet, Yankee prudence would not cause interference with the granting of mortgages by lending institutions. The vast majority of Connecticut residents were still not ready to engage in interracial activities with the Negroes. No more than 25 per cent were willing to engage in activities within the home and less than 20 were willing to engage in any type of interracial activity outside the home. In the area of personal services, such as barbering, the dichotomy appears even greater. The issue was more clearly drawn in the smaller communities, such as Plainville, where the Negro population was not large enough to support separate shops. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People planned a demonstration in Plainville which it was hoped would have national significance. Negroes "have considerable difficulty in getting haircuts," it was charged, and were usually told "to come back later, to come back on Sunday or after hours." The barbers were informed by Attorney Milton Koskoff, counsel for the Negroes, that effective May 1, 1962, the Negroes would patronize Plainville barber shops without regard to past discriminatory practice. Though progress was slow, there was evidence that Connecticut was bringing its social practices to accord with its expressed social theory.²³

The Sales Tax

To provide the funds necessary for the legislation enacted and to meet the financial needs of the post-war years it was necessary to find a new source of revenue. The expenses of the State's government had increased to 113 million in 1947 as compared to 69 million in 1945 and to 34 million in 1929. The taxes introduced during the depression years, those on beverages and cigarettes and the corporate business tax, proved inadequate for the needs of government in the years after the war. Although greater revenues from the expanded war economy together with a curtailment of expenditures had produced a surplus, it had been acquired at the expense of state services. Governor McConaughy in 1947 summarized his discussion of the state's fiscal condition with the observation that the only alternative to an increase in taxes was the further elimination of certain state services.²⁴

The Republicans "jammed through" the sales tax in the 1947 session of the General Assembly over bitter protests. It was generally agreed that additional revenue was a necessity, but there was a sharp difference over whether this should be derived from a sales or income tax. The opposition to the sales tax was voiced by representatives of diverse segments of the population: the A. F. of L. and the Connecticut Manufacturers Association, the C.I.O. and the Retail Merchants Association, the International Office Employees and 600 students at Trinity College all recorded opposition. To the charge that the tax was regressive, it was replied that it was necessary; and in answer to the proponents of the income tax, it was stated that this tax would not produce the requisite revenue. A basis of compromise had not been reached as the date for the adjournment of the Assembly approached, and on May 26 Governor McConaughy made a radio appeal to the public. In the formal debate which followed, the Democrats seized the opportunity to portray theirs as the party of the people and the Republicans as that of special privilege stating that the income tax was the only fair and equitable tax and the sales tax was discriminatory. The Republicans contributed to the acrimony by presenting for vote a sales tax bill modeled after the California plan, whereas the public hearing had been on a proposal paralleling that in use in Ohio. More than

once the opposition was "gavelled" into silence as the bill moved toward a roll call vote amidst cries of "vicious," "shameful," and "a Frankenstein monster." The Republican dominated House favored the bill 150 to 103. The donnybrook continued in the Senate where a limitation was imposed on debate for the first time since 1863 to stop the filibuster of the Minority Leader. Only one Republican joined with nine Democrats in opposing the bill and it passed. In addition to the three per cent sales tax, the bill also provided for the abolition of an old age assistance tax and the elimination of \$1,250,000 taxes on towns. A first step had been taken toward broadening the tax structure.²⁵

A move for repeal was launched almost immediately. The *Hartford Times* charged the Republican leadership with "bungling" and "dereliction" in its handling of the bill and the *Courant* editorialized that "the General Assembly has given about as classic an example of how a legislative body should not tackle its problems as one would wish for." The Connecticut Manufacturers Association charged that there was no relation between the taxes finally adopted and the needs of the state. The Connecticut Public Expenditure Council which had been organized in 1942 estimated that the tax would yield 50 million dollars, rather than the 26 million which it was estimated was needed. In the first quarter, the tax actually yielded \$9,551,944 which was three million above the estimate. The American Federation of Labor called for repeal, and the Democratic Party joined in the demand. The Republicans, realizing they had made a serious mistake in public relations, undertook a program of education, and Governor McConaughy announced that if the returns justified it he would call a special session of the legislature. It was convened February 17, 1948.²⁶

When the battle was resumed it was along familiar lines. The Democrats charged the Republicans with support of "class legislation." Organized labor marshalled forces in favor of an income tax. The Public Expenditure Council opposed the income tax, asserting "it found no group . . . favoring it." It was feared that rates on high income groups would be prohibitive. To give the dignity of expertese to its views the legislative committee employed a special consultant to study the sales tax and to make recommendations. He did not disappoint the committee. He was strongly opposed to the income tax. As finally altered, the tax was reduced to one

per cent for the remainder of the biennium and was to be raised to two per cent for the biennium starting July 1, 1949.²⁷

The political advantage for which the Democrats had hoped was not forthcoming. After the battle of words had subsided and the tax was permanently established, it was almost unnoticed by the public. In the gubernatorial campaign of 1948, Chester Bowles made the sales tax an issue with uncertain results. In his inaugural in 1949, he called unsuccessfully for its repeal, but on his advice it was dropped from the Democratic platform in 1950. The costs of government continued to increase and the needs for revenue were even greater. The rate was restored to three per cent in 1953, and when a further increase in the existent taxes became imperative, the sales tax was increased to three and one half per cent in 1961. Once the sales tax was established, each Party refused to risk its political fortune by support of an income tax preferring instead to support increases in the sales tax.²⁸

Housing

The Republicans made a beginning on, but did not solve, the housing problem, which in many respects was the most vexatious of the post-war issues. To provide moderate rental housing, the state guaranteed, by an act of 1947, the notes and bonds of local housing authorities to the extent of \$15,000,000 for a period of not to exceed 35 years. As of June 30, 1948, 1,568 dwelling units were under construction. The next day the State Housing Administrator notified Governor James C. Shannon, who had succeeded Governor McConaughy following his untimely death on March 7, 1948, that 3,000 additional units were needed beyond those which could be provided with the available funds. On the eve of the election of 1948, the Governor called a special session of the Assembly for August. The amount of the guarantee for rental housing was increased to \$45,000,000 and the period of the guarantee was extended to 50 years. The program lagged, however, partially as a result of the failure of the local authorities to secure adequate sites, and partially because of the complicated administrative procedure involved in the program. By June 30, in the next year, 16 projects were under construction; one of which

was occupied and four partially occupied. Housing had become a central issue in the 1948 gubernatorial campaign.²⁹

Election of 1948

The platforms of the respective parties revealed their basic strategy. The Republicans endorsed as their candidate the incumbent, Governor Shannon, who most observers believed would win easily. The G.O.P. had won handily in 1946, and 1948 was viewed as a Republican year. The Party was content, therefore, to run on its record: to continue those programs enacted, to study those about which it was not convinced, to propose to balance the budget without new taxes, to oppose Communism, and to permit the Democrats to take the initiative. This was implicit in their liberal platform. A break with tradition was contained in the Democratic proposals for more equal representation in the General Assembly and a direct primary for the selection of state and local officials. The suggested seventy-five cents minimum wage and the extension of workmen's compensation insurance were recognitions of labor's hopes and of its political strength. The recommended repeal of the sales tax hit at an issue which had at least been troublesome for the Republicans and the proposal to modify the eviction laws and to build 65,000 low rent housing units was pointing toward issues which had been most difficult to them. The program which was "long on promises," wrote Keith Schonrock of the *Courant*, but in Bowles the Democrats had one who could articulate these promises and invigorate the party.³⁰

The relentless attack of this novice campaigner shook the Republicans, belatedly, from their complacency. The proposal for the repeal of the sales tax brought uncertain responses. Shannon met successfully Bowles' program for labor by the observations that the minimum wage law in Connecticut was far in excess of that of the Federal Government and that the unemployment compensation tax in the state "was the most liberal in the United States." A break came late in September with the withdrawal of the third, Wallace Party candidate, Thomas L. Emerson. Bowles refused the endorsement of the party, but accepted the potential votes. His idea of voluntary price controls by which the grocers and housewives would agree to price lists to force prices down created greater political fire than

the proposal merited. When Shannon took the position that nothing could be done about prices on the state level and refused to debate the issue publicly, charging his opponent with a bold-face attempt to deceive the Connecticut people, Bowles characterized the Republican leaders as "a tired group of little, frightened people taking refuge in the past and never talking about the present or the future at a time when the demand of the times is for dynamic, forward-looking, liberal leadership."³¹

As he outlined his Party's position, Bowles struck "pay dirt" on the housing issue. After Bowles presented at New Haven in mid-September five living victims of the unfortunate housing plight, the *Hartford Times* warned the Republicans that "it could be that the attempt to just laugh Mr. Bowles off won't be too successful." Until the last of October, Shannon seemed content to blame the shortage of housing on the blunderings of the Truman Administration. When the Governor undertook to defend the housing program, there developed a sharp difference of opinion on the number of units needed. Shannon estimated that 14,500 would be adequate while Bowles called for more than twice that number. To Shannon's assertion that the housing problem was being licked, Bowles charged that "a thousand Connecticut families who are doubled up with their relatives, and the thousands more who are facing eviction will still see the same ugly housing shortage."³²

The campaign evolved into bitter acrimony in the last days of the campaign. Republicans accused Bowles of being sinister and dishonest, and the Democrats replied with charges of "smears, innuendoes, and distortions." The visit of Thomas Dewey and President Truman to the state in late October indicated that the state had slipped into the doubtful category. Dewey, however, could not rally the party to a last great effort. The pollsters had predicted certain victory for him and in a very real sense he symbolized the spirit of confident complacency characteristic of the state party. Truman, like Bowles, had been told he couldn't win, but with an energy which matched that of Bowles he carried the issue to the people. On the eve of the election it was admitted that Bowles had "peddled his panaceas for human and household ills with a suavity that cannot be denied," and that he had pounded hard on the issues he presented. It was doubted, however, that he could deliver on the program, but it was admitted that there were a lot of people who might benefit

from its implementation. There were enough in fact, to give Bowles a narrow victory of 2,225 votes and the Democrats a majority of 23 to 13 in the Senate. The Republicans controlled the House by the margin of 179-93.³³ There is no doubt that labor played an important part in Bowles' victory and the withdrawal of the Wallace Party candidate had its effect. In a contest in which the margin is so slight, however, almost any event or circumstance of any political significance might have turned the victory to Governor Shannon. The one thing which stands out from a reading of the press reports on the campaign is the enthusiasm and energy of the Democratic candidate and his ability to transmit this to the Party and concurrently to elicit from the voter a response indicating confidence in him as a candidate. The Connecticut Manufacturers Association saw in the election "an object lesson" for all; "he who has faith in his cause and is willing to fight for it with all the wisdom and energy he possesses, has a good chance of winning in spite of seemingly impossible odds."³⁴

NOTES — CHAPTER XXXIV

1. Robinson, "Selective Service in Connecticut," pp. 169-83; *Hartford Courant*, August 8, 1945; *Connecticut Industry*, XXII, Nov., 1944, p. 14.
2. Robinson, "Selective Service in Connecticut," pp. 169-83; *Hartford Courant*, August 8, 1945; *Connecticut Industry*, XXII, Nov., 1944, p. 14, XXIV, June, 1946, p. 23.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 14; *Hartford Courant*, Aug. 5, 23, Mar. 12, 1946.
4. *New Britain Herald*, Oct. 20, 1948; Digest of Connecticut Administrative Reports to the Governor, 1947-48, II, pp. 88-89, 1948-49, p. 75; General Statutes of Connecticut, 1947 revision, pp. 967-78.
5. *Connecticut Industry*, XXI, Nov., 1945, p. 8; *Hartford Courant*, Aug. 18, 1945.
6. *Connecticut Industry*, XXIV, 1946, p. 91, July, 1946, p. 16; *Hartford Courant*, Oct. 3, 18, 1944.
7. *Connecticut Industry*, XXIV, April, 1946; Connecticut Labor Department, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Connecticut Labor Statistics, (Hartford, 1954), Table A-3, Table B; *Hartford Courant*, Oct. 18, 28, Nov., 5, 1944, Aug. 15, 19, 21, 25, 1945.
8. *Connecticut Industry*, XXI, Oct., 1943, p. 5, XXIII, Nov. 1945, p. 25, Dec. 1945, p. 9, XXIV, Feb., 1946; *Hartford Courant*, Aug. 25, 1925.
9. Ewing "History of the Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Company," p. 239; Labor Statistics, 1954, Table F, 1; *Connecticut Industry*, XXIII, Nov.

- 1945, p. 6, XXIV, Jan. 1946, p. 5, Feb. 1946, p. 5, Apr. 1946, p. 30, May, 1946, p. 34, June, 1946, p. 5.
10. *Hartford Courant*, Oct. 4, 9, 1944, Aug. 1, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 1945; *Connecticut Industry*, XXIV, Apr. 1946, pp. 5, 34; Elizabeth Donahue, "Chester Bowles in Politics," *The New Republic*, CXV, Aug. 12, 1945, p. 172.
 11. *Ibid.*; Robert Bendiner, "Pre-Election U.S.A.; Along the Connecticut Valley," *The Nation*, CLXIII, Oct. 5, 1946; *Hartford Courant*, Sept. 2-17, 1946.
 12. *Hartford Courant*, Sept. 10-18, Nov. 6-8, 1946; Bendiner, "Pre-Election U.S.A.," p. 373.
 13. For the income, disbursements, and status of the fund see Reports of the Soldiers, Sailors, and Marine Fund, Digest of Administrative Reports, 1947-60.
 14. General Statutes of the State of Connecticut, 1947 revision, p. 2601; *Hartford Courant*, June 1-8, 1947.
 15. *Ibid.*
 16. *Ibid.*, Mar. 26, Apr. 1, 2, 3, 1931, Apr. 6, 1935, Aug. 8, 1939, Mar. 21, 23, 26, 27, 1940, May 10, June 3, 1942, Feb. 2, 1943.
 17. Connecticut General Assembly, Notes of Public Hearings, Committee on Public Health and Safety, 1947, pp. 54-74; *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 22, Mar. 19, Apr. 8, 29, May 8, 15, 1947; *The New Republic*, May, 19, 1947, p. 8.
 18. *Middletown Press*, 1961; Notes of Public Hearings, pp. 54-74; Public Acts, 1957, p. 814.
 19. Ernest George Lake, "The Apportionment and the Distribution of the State School Grants in Connecticut," (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 1943), pp. 1-4; R. Daniel Chubbeck, "Boards of Finance and Educational Policy in Connecticut," (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Yale University, School of Education, 1951), pp. 1-10; General Statutes of Connecticut, 1949 revision (Hartford, 1948), p. 578; 1955 Supplement to the General Statutes (Hartford, 1955), p. 358; Digest of Connecticut Administrative Reports to the Governor, 1947-1961, see sections on education; Public Acts, 1957, p. 1012, 1961, p. 862.
 20. General Statutes of Connecticut, 1949 revision, pp. 2704-9; *Connecticut Industry*, XXV, July, 1947, p. 7, Nov. 1947, p. 9, Digest of Administrative Reports, 1947-48, pp. 73-75.
 21. See the Reports of the Inter-Racial Commission and its successor, the Civil Rights Commission in Digest of Administrative Reports, 1948-1959.
 22. *Ibid.*; Henry G. Stetler, "Racial Integration in Private Residential Neighborhoods in Connecticut," Hartford, 1947.
 23. *Ibid.*, VI-IX; *Hartford Courant*, April 14, 1962.
 24. Inaugural Address, Governor McConaughy (Hartford, 1947), p. 5; Paul Mason Taylor, "The Connecticut Sales Tax" (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Boston University, 1951) pp. 1-52.
 25. *Ibid.*; Stenographic notes of Public Hearings, General Assembly, (Hart-

- ford, 1947); Hartford *Times*, May 27, 1947; Hartford *Courant*, May 27, 28, 29, 1947.
26. *Ibid.*, May 30, 1947; Hartford *Times*, May 28, 1947; "Embarrassment of Riches," *Business Week*, Nov. 1947, p. 30; Taylor, pp. 30-72.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 92-108.
29. Digest of Administrative Reports, 1947, pp. 88-89, 1948-49, p. 75.
30. *The New Republic*, CXIX, Oct. 4, 1948, p. 7; Hartford *Courant*, Aug. 14, 15, Sept. 14, 15, 19, 20, 1948.
31. Taylor, "Connecticut Sales Tax," p. 92; *The New Republic*, CXIX, Oct. 4, 1948, p. 7; Hartford *Times*, Sept. 8, 9, Oct. 8, 1948; New Britain *Herald*, Oct. 16, 25, 1948.
32. Hartford *Times*, Sept. 1, 24, Oct. 2, 1948; New Britain *Herald*, Oct. 15, 20, 22, 1948.
33. New Britain *Herald*, Oct. 25, 1949; *Register and Manual*, 1954, pp. 393-401; Hartford *Courant*, Oct. 19, 24, 28, 29, 1948.
34. *Connecticut Industry*, XXVI, Nov. 1948, p. 7.

Chapter XXXV

The Challenge at Mid-Century

THE BITTERNESS of the campaign carried over into the session of the General Assembly and characterized the entire Bowles administration. It may be conjectured if the Republicans were not more angry with themselves for losing the election than they were with Bowles for winning it, but it appears that in their attacks on the Governor they found something of a catharsis for their own failures. The *Hartford Courant*, even before the session opened in 1949, reminded the public of the Governor Elect's political indebtedness to the large cities. The majority leader of the House, George Conway, in referring to a phase of the Governor's program as "merely . . . a token gift which would attract pressure groups' support," struck a note which became a full concerto before the session was concluded. For special effects, Clarence Baldwin, the Chairman of the Republican party, joined in, portraying the Grand Old Party as saving the state from bankruptcy. The new Governor, on the other hand, did little to avoid partisanship. His address to the Legislature, at a time when it was no longer honorific to be called a liberal, was anathema to Republican members who had taken pride in being regarded as the bulwark of conservatism. He deleted, with the care of a copy reader, all references to Democrats or Republicans, identified members of the assembly as liberals and conservatives, and in the manner of a school master instructed them as to the relative virtues of each. The problem of the conservatives, the Governor volunteered, was "not in any lack of humanity and good will," but in their tendency to "feel that public problems, if left alone, will eventually solve themselves." In addition, John Bailey, the Chairman of the Democratic Party, exclaimed, "Republicans are living in the nineteenth century and are at least 50 years behind the

times.” The scope of the program and the speed with which it was to be accomplished, not only challenged steady habits, but came to be regarded as dangerous to the well being of the state itself. In an effort to force through legislation the Democratic Senate placed “pet bills” of the Republicans at the foot of the calendar. Conway asked Bowles to “go on a vacation so that the Assembly could come to some agreement.”¹

Housing

One week after the Assembly convened, Governor Bowles, in a special message recommended that 10,000 housing units be built in addition to the 3,000 authorized in the special session of the Assembly the previous Fall. It was recommended that one-half of the total be constructed in accord with the established plan and rent for \$55 and the other half rent for from \$20 to \$55, depending on income, or, at an average rent of \$35. The lower rent was to be made possible by a state subsidy. The Republicans quickly warned that they would not accept the subsidy idea and translated their threat into a reality on March 25 by burying the Governor’s proposal in committee. A basis for compromise was provided by the Governor’s dropping his subsidy plan and suggesting a new plan of financing. Instead of merely guaranteeing the loans to local housing authorities, as provided in previous legislation, he recommended that the state borrow money and lend it to the local authorities. The savings which would accrue as a result of the state’s greater borrowing power would be reflected in lower rents. The Republicans accepted the method of financing, but the rent for a unit was fixed at forty dollars a month rather than the \$35 as Bowles had hoped. The additional \$20,000,000 provided brought the total for moderate rental housing to \$65,000,000.² An additional \$50,000,000 was authorized in 1951. In all, provision was thus made for 10,000 units, or for 37,000 persons. The last of the rental projects were in the process of construction in 1956. At the end of June, 1958, 8,945 rental homes were completed and occupied, 234 were under construction and 569 were in various stages of planning. The average gross rent from rental homes was at that time \$59.90.³ In addition, a home ownership program was introduced for moderate income families. The state was authorized to issue short term notes and bonds to the amount of \$30,000,000 to provide mortgage funds at

one-half of one per cent more than the interest paid by the state for qualified moderate income families. The actual interest rate was one and one-half per cent. These houses were designed for families with incomes of less than \$2,500 plus \$600 for each dependent and whose net cash worth was \$3,000.⁴ An additional \$30,000,000 was provided in 1950, and the limits for qualification were raised to \$3000 and \$3500 respectively. Six thousand moderate income families were assisted in buying homes under this plan. By 1958, 167 of the mortgages had been completely retired and approximately one per cent of the mortgages outstanding were in default as a result of the economic decline.⁵ To expedite the solution of the housing problem there was established a number of regional housing authorities and a more stringent eviction law was proposed. The last session of the General Assembly had refused to act on such a law, and in the interim tenants had been evicted at an ever increasing rate. The belief that the situation was only temporary was evidenced by the establishment of May 1, 1951 as the expiration date of the new provisions which prevented any landlord from bringing action for the recovery of any place used as a dwelling except in the event the tenant was a nuisance or failed to pay rent, or if the quarters were to be used for residence for himself or for his immediate family.⁶

A Legislative Breach

The stridence of the legislative session was matched by the uproar which came in Republican ranks when Governor Bowles announced that Senator Baldwin had been appointed an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. It was generally concluded that this was quite a coup for Bowles and Bailey. Thus, Baldwin was eliminated as a political factor; the Governor was free to name his former business associate, William Benton, to the Senate for the unexpired term; and the Republicans were embarrassed that one of their own Party had made a deal with the enemy. Though it did little to soothe the troubled waters of the legislative session, it was for Baldwin an opportunity to serve the state in still another capacity.⁷

As economic conditions dropped sharply, a measure of assistance was extended to the unemployed. The general business activity of the state dropped for the first time to a pre-war level. Some believed that the

recession was temporary and due to inventory adjustments; others thought the economy was making a permanent adjustment to pre-war production levels after the large backlog of orders had been filled. The latter interpretation was especially applied to the light metal manufacturers where the decline was the most severe. The number of the jobless reached a 12 year high as the total increased from 25,000 in mid-October, 1948, to 106,200 in July, 1949. Moreover, thousands of those employed were working less than full time. The total number of hours worked dropped from 13.9 million in 1948 to 10.5 million in June, 1949. The General Assembly responded somewhat grudgingly, it seems, to organized labor's demand that the period of unemployment payments be increased from 22 to 26 weeks. Factory employment began to improve by mid-Summer, and although the recovery was uneven, the economy took a definite turn for the better in the Fall of 1949.⁸

After five months and hundreds of invectives, the session came to an end without a budget with which to operate the government. It had been the custom for Governors to present to the General Assembly only an accounting of general fund operations. The receipts and expenditures of the highway fund, for example, were not included, nor were the receipts from the Federal Government. Although such methods kept the electorate in something of a paradisiac ignorance of the cost of government, there was merit in Bowles' contention that the people should be fully informed. The "complete" budget including the recommended expenditures from all funds amounted to approximately \$300,000,000. This appeared to be a 100 per cent increase over the budget of the previous biennium, but it actually represented only a 12 per cent increase in state expenditures. To arrive at this apparently reasonable increase, however, the Governor was utilizing a \$20,000,000 reserve which Republican administration had saved, and was recommending that capital expenditures be financed by bond issues, the latter was contrary to Republican doctrine, despite the fact the Party had succumbed to it as necessary to provide bonuses for World War II veterans. The GOP now stuck to their "pay-as-you-go" principle and insisted that aid to education and buildings for vocational schools and for the University of Connecticut be financed out of current income. They then sought to engage in their own sleight of hand by attempting to divert \$11,000,000 in sales tax that had been earmarked to pay install-

ments on the Veterans Bonus Bonds. While the politicians played at their game of building a record which would attract voters in the next election, the hour of adjournment approached. In the last minutes "the air was filled with budgets of all kinds," but agreement had been reached on none. The Governor reminded the General Assembly of its failures when it assembled in special session on June 14 and submitted that the only way to provide the necessary services, and concurrently to balance the budget, was by financing capital expenditures by bond issues. Agreement was quickly reached on bond issues totaling \$4,250,000 for the teacher colleges and \$7,000,000 for the vocational school. The operating budget was approved on the first day of the special session. A bitter dispute arose, however, on aid for public school buildings, and, on June 16, the House recessed until recalled by its speaker on the last day of the month. Agreement had not been achieved and the issue remained for future special sessions.⁹

Aid to School Building Construction

After almost a year of bickering, agreement was reached on a workable plan for extending state aid for the construction of public school buildings. In an effort to resolve the issue which had failed of solution amidst the snarling and wrangling of the regular session, Governor Bowles called the General Assembly to meet in November for its third special session of the year. The idea of aid for public school buildings was not new and the experiences had been supplemented during the regular session with reams of testimony by lay and professional groups.¹⁰ Bowles confused the issue and laid himself open to charges of political favoritism by combining the one question with an extension of state aid for operational expenses of schools and an alteration in the method of distributing aid. The state aid formula discriminated against the cities and Bowles recommended the correction of this inequity by basing the allocation of funds on the ability of a school district to pay after an equalized grand list had been established. This not only hit at the self-interest of the small towns, but was immediately seized upon as an effort of the Governor to "pay off" the cities for the pluralities they returned for him in the election.

The monies required for the programs recommended by the Governor were such as to make education the focus of bitter political debate.

The Democrats were unwilling for the needed monies to come from the general fund, which would have forced increased taxes, an anathema to most Connecticut politicians, and recommended a bond issue to cover the costs. The Republicans were equally insistent that if the Governor were to gain the political advantage for extended services, he should bear the political responsibility for increased taxes, and opposed the bond issue. After the two parties had failed to reach agreement in the regular session, the Democratic Senate, in a last desperate effort passed the Republican sponsored bill calling for \$9,000,000 in aid for the construction of public school buildings, but Bowles vetoed the measure.¹¹ Subsequently a report of a study sponsored by the school boards of the state revealed that 116 of the 171 boards stated that their communities must have state aid, leaving only seven which stated positively that no aid was required. One-fourth of the school buildings of the state, it was stated, had been built in the nineteenth century and that little or no building had been done during the thirties and the forties. There remained 55 one room school buildings in the state. As the Governor addressed the special session in November, he referred frequently to this report and warned the law makers that the people of Connecticut "do not expect us to exploit this vital public problem as a sounding board for political advantage. . . ." This was too much to expect. The Democrats repeated the bonding proposal and the Republicans eventually agreed to accept it if the Governor would accept full responsibility. The Governor was not inclined to usurp from the Republican House this legislative prerogative. He was weary and perhaps a bit chagrined at the public reaction. On November 20, the question was referred to final arbiters of legislative disputes—the bipartisan caucus of the leaders of both parties. A total of \$1,500,000 was appropriated from the general fund for aid to school building construction, up to one-third of the total cost. Although the principle of the bond issue was rejected, something of the same effect was achieved by spreading the state's payments over a period of twenty years. Although by such an arrangement the state would not bear directly the interest costs, the practical difference between that plan finally passed, and that originally suggested by Bowles, was slight indeed.¹² Of equal if

not greater importance in solving the school building problem was the authorization to permit local communities to issue bonds for school building construction in excess of the previous statutory limitation of five per cent by another five per cent.¹³

Government Organization

The recommendations of the Commission on State Government Organization, which had been authorized a year previously by the regular session of the General Assembly, were far reaching. In recognition of the desirability of maintaining the relative balance of the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of government it was recommended that they be reorganized and strengthened concurrently. By the application of executive management techniques in personnel and fiscal affairs and through the centralization of executive functions, the Commission held that the business of the State could be discharged more efficiently and economically. On the premise that the Governor was the elective official of the state most responsible and most responsive to the will of the people, all executive officers other than he and the Lieutenant Governor were to be appointed, to secure a greater coordination of state services and centralization of executive functions, it was provided that the 200 separate agencies be reduced to fourteen, and that the counties be eliminated as administrative units of government.

A unified court system was suggested wherein the Chief Justice, with the assistance of an Office of Judicial Services, would exercise administrative direction over the other courts. The suggested system would continue the Supreme and the Superior Courts unchanged, a Common Pleas Division to replace the existent Municipal Courts and Justices of the Peace, a Family Court Division, and a Probate Court Division. All judges were to be nominated by the Governor and confirmed by the General Assembly for periods of eight years, but with the implied suggestion that they would be for life.

To provide for a stronger and more independent legislature it was recommended that the Senate be redistricted, that the House be reduced to one from each town, or to a total of 169, that candidates for the state legislature be nominated by direct primary, that compensation for its

members be increased, that they not be permitted to hold appointive positions concurrently with the terms of their elected offices, and that there be established an office of legislative services which would provide research assistance as well as perform the usual house-keeping functions.

To guarantee to the people the right to alter their form of government, the initiative and referendum were recommended. While urging the necessity of greater centralization of those necessary functions of state government, the commission sought to keep this concentration of power within bounds by suggesting that local governments be constitutionally authorized to act on local matters, broadly defined in accordance with general laws as defined by the General Assembly, and through the constitutional prohibition of special legislation for cities and towns. It was clear to the members of the Commission that until constitutional changes were made "in several important particulars . . . the prospects of getting materially better management in our State Government are remote." The historical failures of conventions as a method of resolving such issues did not commend this procedure to the commission, and the sense of urgency for reform dictated against the methodical, but slow process provided by the constitution. On the constitutional basis that the people "have at all times an undeniable right to alter their forms of government in such manner as they may think expedient" the commission recommended that the constitutional changes be drafted and submitted directly to the voters.¹⁴

When the report was made available February 27, 1950, it caused a ripple on Connecticut's political sea. The Democrats were quite willing for the Republicans to do the talking, but initially they did not take a completely negative position. It is true that the Republican Central Committee requested, "more light" which was interpreted by the *Courant* as taking "dim view of the whole thing." Charles Conway, Republican leader in the House, believed that the legislature would support anything which would promote efficiency and economy, but was disappointed that the report did not provide specific indication that any money could be saved. Charles House, Republican leader in the Senate, was not ready to sign on the dotted line and believed that certain parts of the report needed "a looking over," but that "it would be unfortunate" if the report were "not substantially adopted." Bowles had sought to lessen the possibilities of partisan strife when in the regular session he requested the Assembly

to create the Commission by resolution rather than his doing so by executive order. The temper of the regular and special session, however, was such that it would have been miraculous in an election year if each party did not seek to gain political advantage at any opportunity. It was clear that such a miracle was not in the making when on the opening day of the special session wrangling broke out on the organization of the committee to hear the report. It was becoming evident that the strong support of the electorate would be necessary if there were to be any significant changes in the organization of state government.¹⁵

The practical difficulties of inaugurating the plan were revealed as active opposition developed. There were many who doubted the legality of submitting the constitutional changes directly to the people as the commission suggested, and others who refused to support a bill asking the Supreme Court for an advisory opinion for fear that such action would in effect support revision of the constitution. Fear was expressed of the centralization of authority and the Governor was portrayed as being insincere. Opposition was voiced to the suggestion that department heads be appointed without confirmation and that the highway fund be merged with the general fund. There was adequate support for the general principles of reorganization, but there was no support for the specific proposals. Everyone favored reorganization except as it applied to him, it seemed. It was whispered in the corridors that if the initiative were granted, the first bills which would be introduced would be those legalizing horse racing and pari-mutuel betting and the dissemination of birth control information. Group after group voiced their protest: the State Grange, the State Farm Bureau, the Association of School Superintendents, the Connecticut Manufacturers Association. On the first day of public hearings, March 21, not one of the 200 present spoke in favor of authorizing a commission to draft the constitutional changes. When the hearings opened 41 of the legislative committee named to conduct the hearings were in their seats, but in the afternoon session there were only 12. The *Courant* prophesied that the plan would follow others to the scrap heap.¹⁶

The Republicans quickly seized the initiative. Baldwin identified the party as the protector of constitutional government when he announced that it would present its own plan which would effect economies, but would not call for a complete overhaul of the government and would not

centralize power in the Governor. It was formally announced after a GOP caucus that any constitutional changes would have to be accomplished in accordance with established procedure. Republican spokesmen insisted that they were still interested in reorganization and favored home rule and the abolishment of dual jobs.

Bowles meanwhile, had done little to improve the chances of reorganization. When he refused comment on the charge that he was backing away from the elimination of an independent aeronautics unit, he laid himself open to the charge of yielding to pressure and being insincere. When, somewhat belatedly given the course of events, Bowles announced his willingness to compromise, he repeated his penchant for classifying people—this time as sincere and insincere—for which he was sharply rebuked by the *Courant*. The Governor now favored independent agriculture, conservation, and aeronautics units, agreed to go slow on constitutional revision and to merge agencies such as the Public Utilities Commission merely for housekeeping purposes. Although the Republicans claimed that they were far ahead on a realistic program for reorganization, there seemed to be a basis for compromise.¹⁷

A month of negotiation ended in one of the most violent political storms in the state's history and with little accomplished in the way of reorganization of the state's government. Alfred F. Weschler, the Democratic Senate leader, declared on May 23, that "it may be imperative and essential that the Governor call the legislature into special session . . . to determine whether the Republicans are sincere" in their platform, "We may want to put them on the spot." "By his assumption," the *Courant* editorialized "that he and the Governor are the judges who will determine the sincerity of the opposition, Mr. Weschler is talking political Jabberwocky of the kind that has helped fill the average persons with disgust for politics and politicians." The Republicans were outraged by Weschler's statement, and on the 25th, amidst cheers and votes of confidence in the leadership, Conway announced that "if the Governor wants to call us back into special session, let him." The next day the Republican charges against the Governor became so vituperative that the Democrats walked out of the House and reported that the actions of the opponents were a disgrace to the office of Governor. The GOP refused to continue talks on reorganization and went home. Bowles in a radio appeal asked that

they desert their leadership and return. When the Senate convened on May 27 there were no Republicans. The Assembly had passed bills recreating the Public Works Department, strengthening the budget and purchasing divisions within the finance department; establishing uniform terms for state offices, excepting the police and the Adjutant General; and providing for the unification of a few minor functions, the Democrats charged. It was an object lesson, the Governor believed, "that we cannot get decent government until we break the GOP control of the House of Representatives." The campaign had begun.¹⁸

The significance of the Report of the Commission on State Organization rests in its audacious outline of governmental weaknesses, weaknesses which again and again were evidenced in the next decade to condemn: political leaders who had placed party before governmental reorganization; bureaucrats who had approved the principle, but never the application of reorganization; and electors who by apathy had permitted the limited self-interest of pressure groups to determine decisions. If the respected Commission were indeed fitted for its task, it yet failed to understand the implications of its recommendations. By design or by desire, when their prestige was needed most, its members remained out of the line of political fire in what was essentially a political battle. If the Commission's recommendations to shortcut established constitutional procedures were not in reality a realization of the futility of the immediate achievement of the objectives, no better way could have been found to have scuttled the entire plan. The inability of the Chairman of the Commission to provide estimates of the savings which might be expected from the organization was inexcusable from one who signed a report which held that the recommendations would produce a more economical and efficient government. The report itself attests to the breadth and depth of the conceptual theories which gave direction to the efforts of the technical staff, but the report failed to bridge the gap between theory and practice. There was an inability of staff members at times to substantiate their generalizations and these were failures in scholarship which provided wedges through which reams of criticism flowed.

Finally, Governor Bowles failed to provide effective political leadership. Ironically, his greatest failure was in the area in which it was presumed he had the greatest professional competence, that is, with the

techniques of presentation. The electorate, with whom the final decision was to have rested, was never effectively informed of the urgency for change or permitted to educate themselves on the substance of the report, let alone the implications of its meaning. The responsibility for seeing the report through was a responsibility to be assumed jointly by the Assembly and the Governor, but when the Republican party withdrew its identification with the report, it came to be regarded as an attempt of the Executive to seize more power. In fact, the most salient feature of the report was that it called for strengthening simultaneously the executive, the Assembly, and the courts, and for the establishment of new controls in the hands of the citizens. This objective, however, was not kept in the foreground, and the report was identified as designed to promote economy and efficiency, terms more familiar, but not completely understood, particularly as they related to the recommendations. The *Courant* might take editorial pride in the observation that "if Connecticut takes ten years to adopt something as fundamental as this report, including the revision of the constitution, it will not be too long." Significant changes were made in the next decade, but history might show that in this piecemeal approach there has not been maintained a proper balance of strength between the executive, judicial, and legislative branches. Despite the failure to enact the recommendation, the Commission's analysis was indeed a "monument that increases in stature as time goes on."¹⁹

Election 1950

The contestants in the 1950 gubernatorial campaign were indicated early and awaited only the formal actions of their respective party conventions. Governor Bowles, of course, was the Democratic nominee. John Davis Lodge, a younger son in one of New England's most distinguished Republican families, a lawyer by training, an actor by profession, and a politician by desire, had gained early support for his candidacy. He had settled in Connecticut after a distinguished war record and had represented the Fourth district in the United States Congress. He was formally offered the support of the Republican leadership in the latter part of April. Despite moments of apparent confusion within the Republican ranks, he went into the convention with overwhelming support as compared to that

for J. Kenneth Bradley, former Chairman of the Party, or for former Governor Shannon, or for William A. Purtell, the President of the Connecticut Manufacturers Association. The organization had counted its votes skillfully and the state was to await one of its longest campaigns.²⁰ Politics were interrupted briefly with the outbreak of the Korean War in June, 1950. The manufacturing plants of the state had not only increased since World War II, but a large portion had been equipped with new machinery. The state was well equipped to handle the war orders and at the same time maintain its competitive position in the production of non-military goods. The production of consumer goods, which had begun to increase before the war, began to rise rapidly with many of the factories putting on extra shifts. Armament orders came in slowly, the principle gains being made in fabricated metals, primary metals, machinery, and transportation and electrical equipment. Although the shortage of metals began to slow the production, more people were working in Connecticut in December, 1950, than ever before in its history, and the state was on its way to its greatest economic expansion.²¹

The campaign began with Lodge's attacking Bowles' record as Governor, evolved into a brief discussion of the issues, and ended in a free swinging affair with little resemblance to the genteel ways of Boston or the comfortable living of Essex. Lodge questioned the sincerity of Bowles and found astonishing inconsistencies in his administration. Lodge charged that Bowles had failed in his promise to build 56,000 houses, had failed to reduce prices, had changed his mind about a state income tax, and had altered his position on state reorganization. A portion of the record, at least, was on the Governor's side, but it involved subtleties not easily explained to the electorate.

Bowles had stated that there was a need for 56,000 homes, and had said that prices could be controlled by the cooperative action of consumers and retailers. He did change his mind on the income tax and on state reorganization. The latter change, however, it would seem, was one of tactic rather than belief. Some of the steam was taken out of the housing as an issue as a result of the special session of the Assembly which met in September of that year. Although the Republicans manifested their coolness, both toward the special session and toward the Governor, the housing issue was potentially too explosive for them to want to be identified as being in

opposition to it. The Republicans agreed to double the amount of money for assistance in the purchase of homes, but refused to increase the funds available for rental projects. Near the end of the campaign, Lodge in a mood of righteous indignation challenged the Governor's "attempts to mislead our citizens by pretending that he, and he alone, is responsible for the public housing which has been built in Connecticut." There was general agreement as to the necessity of providing more assistance for education, particularly for teachers' salaries. The Governor, however, advocated the establishment of community colleges in all of Connecticut's larger cities. Lodge attempted to counter Bowles' claim that the Republicans had blocked favorable legislation by accenting the ridiculously obvious fact that each beneficial labor law had been enacted when the Republicans at least controlled the House of Representatives.

It was inevitable in a campaign which revealed an apparent lack of enthusiasm for Lodge that the campaign would turn into an attack on his opponent. Inasmuch as Lodge had not been active in State politics, Bowles could only attack the Republican Party while Lodge could attack the candidate, Bowles. Joseph Adorno, the Republican State Treasurer, pressed the charges against the Governor relentlessly. He charged Bowles with burdening the state with the greatest debt in its history, and suggested that Governor Bowles should pursue his Presidential ambitions at his own expense. Lodge picked up the refrain by declaring that "if all the grandiose schemes of Governor Bowles had been put into effect, the state would have been plunged into bankruptcy." Bowles, in turn, charged Adorno with trying to blackmail him by refusing to pay the state employees unless Bowles gave Adorno authority to borrow the funds necessary. As the campaign neared its conclusion, Bowles summarized his views of the Republican campaign by stating that it "tries to substitute free beer for better housing, spangled dancers for better schools. . . . It tries anything that will draw attention from a candidate who has nothing to offer and no place to go. It has been devoted exclusively to what they are against, avoiding what they are for." Lodge provided a similar evaluation of the Democratic effort. The Democratic Party, he said, "convinced that it cannot win at the polls, has resorted to slurs and smears in an effort to gain votes. The Democrats are short on ammunition, and have abandoned any attempt at a frank discussion of issues and principles." The

Republican attack appeared to be paying off; and the beloved "Veep," Alben W. Barkley, was rushed into the state in an attempt to stem the tide. His efforts were too little. Lodge's 439,000 votes gave him a plurality of 17,000.²²

Connecticut owed more to Chester Bowles, perhaps, than it would acknowledge, and the Democratic Party more than it would ever care to admit. Although he failed to achieve the reorganization of the government during his administration, he, more than any other, was responsible for the idea that if Connecticut were to retain her historic independence, her government had to be made strong and workable. He was not the first Governor to advocate reforms, but none attacked the problems of society simultaneously on more fronts or advocated alterations with greater zeal. His aggressiveness aroused the fears of the conservatives and caused them to coalesce to stem what they believed to be a radical tide, but in the combat they absorbed ideas which pushed them further in the direction of a moderate position toward which they were already tending. Within the Democratic Party Bowles was in a very real sense the last in the New Deal tradition. His audaciousness, and his aggressiveness became object lessons in what not to do, but in concept his ideas provided a blue print for advance. In its realization, Connecticut chose "the middle way."

NOTES — CHAPTER XXXV

1. *Hartford Times*, Feb. 2, 1949; *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 2, Feb. 20, Mar. 3, May 5, May 20, 1949; Governor's Message, Journal of the House, (Hartford, 1949), p. 36.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 36, Part 2, p. 596; Public Acts, 1949, p. 268; *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 10, Mar. 25, June 10, 1949; *Hartford Times*, Jan. 10, Feb. 2, Mar. 1, 22, Apr. 13, .
3. See Report of the Public Works Department, Housing Division, Digest of Administrative Reports (Hartford, 1958).
4. Public Acts, 1949, p. 279.
5. See Reports of the State Housing Authority 1948-51 and Reports of the Public Works Department, 1951-58 in Digest of Administrative Reports, 1948-58.
6. Journal of the House, Jan., 1949, p. 62; Public Acts, 1949, pp. 5, 268.
7. *Hartford Courant*, Apr. 28, May 1, 1949.
8. Public Acts, 1949, p. 295; Department of Labor and Factory Inspection, Digest of Administrative Reports, 1949-50, p. 229; State of

- Connecticut, Department of Labor Bulletin, Feb. 1949, p. 1, June, 1949, p. 5, July, 1949, p. 6, Sept. 1949, p. 6; *Connecticut Industry*, XXX, July 1952, p. 44.
9. Journal of the House, Jan. 1949, p. 201; *ibid.*, Special Session, June, 1949, pp. 1-38; Report of the Department of Finance and Control, Administrative Digest, 1947-48, 1948-49, 1949-50; *Hartford Courant*, June 15, 16, 17.
 10. General Statutes, 1947, p. 579; Journal of the House, Special Session, Nov., 1949, p. 9; *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 28, Feb. 17, 1949.
 11. *Ibid.*, Feb. 6, 7, 20, 21, Mar. 3, 6, 10, 23, 27, Apr. 30, May 5, 8, 15, 20, June 2, 3, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 1949.
 12. Journal of the House, Special Session, Nov., 1949, p. 9; *Hartford Courant*, Nov. 2, 3, 11, 27; Public Acts, Special Sessions, 1949, Public Act No. 6.
 13. *Ibid.* Public Act No. 6.
 14. Carter Atkins, Chairman, Report to the General Assembly and Governor on Organization of State Government (Hartford, 1950), pp. 1-78.
 15. Journal of the House, Part 1, Jan., 1949, p. 64; *Hartford Courant*, March 1, 2, 5, 9, 1949.
 16. *Ibid.*, Mar. 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 22, 1949.
 17. *Ibid.*, Mar. 26, 29, Apr. 2-8, 13, 14, 18, 19, 26, 1949.
 18. *Ibid.*, May 24, 25, 26, 27, 1949.
 19. *Ibid.*, Mar. 5, 9, 1950.
 20. *Ibid.*, Apr. 30, June 4, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 1950; *Hartford Times*, July 29, 1950; Register and Manual, 1950, p. 67.
 21. Monthly Labor Bulletin, July, 1950, p. 6, Aug. 1950, p. 1, Dec., 1950, p. 10.
 22. *New Britain Herald*, Sept. 5, 12, 19, Oct. 4, 17, 21, 30; *New Haven Register*, Oct. 30, Nov. 2, 1950; *Hartford Times*, Sept. 26, Oct. 4, 7, 10, 14, 17, 1950.

Chapter XXXVI

The Middle Way

JOHN DAVIS LODGE was identified as one who would check dangerous radicalism and direct the course of public affairs within the accepted precepts of the "middle way." He failed to exert, however, that strong leadership in legislative matters which it was expected would result from his being the first Connecticut Governor to be elected to a four year term. Legislation frequently languished. He came to office as leader of a Party which was united in victory; as a result of an effort to purge the party of leaders antithetical to his concepts of democracy, he left the party divided. Thereby Lodge contributed to the development of the Democratic Party as a dominant force in Connecticut politics.

The Lack of Political Leadership

The new Governor failed to demonstrate the will or the ability to exercise the political leadership incumbent upon one in the position to which he had been elected. The Democrats controlled the Senate by a thin 19 to 17 margin and the Governor's concept of political responsibility would not permit a single patronage deal to neutralize the Democratic senatorial majority and give the Republicans complete control of the legislature. As he spoke on inaugural day amidst the uncertainties of the early months of the Korean War, John Davis Lodge envisaged his destiny as that of a war governor and this he interpreted as requiring an administration in which "harsh unadorned necessity" should rule every decision. When this was applied to a legislative program, not only was every non-essential ferreted out, but also many programs which the Governor professed to have wished to have seen begun were denied. The

Governor's aloofness from legislative affairs might be explained by this concept of the requirements of the times or by his desire to avoid the strife between the executive and the Assembly which had characterized Bowles' administration. His aloofness reached ridiculous proportions when he refused to fight for any program, even for those which were included in the Republican platform. He surrounded himself with a "personal guard," and quickly ran afoul of the reporters who covered the Capitol beat as he appeared to assume that the affairs of his office were of concern only to himself and his coterie and not to the people of the state. Republican legislators complained they could never talk to the Governor alone, and there were other complaints that he handled his mail poorly. His actions gave the outward appearance of restoring the Assembly to its "proper and traditional" place, but in reality he failed to assume the responsibilities of political leadership. Even the favorably inclined *Hartford Courant* wrote that "it would help if the Governor indicated what he wanted."¹

A Steel Mill Rejected

An abortive attempt to establish a steel mill in Connecticut elicited great interest early in the session. The idea of a steel mill had gained momentum since 1946 and seemed to be near reality when, on January 11, 1951, the Federal Government issued a certificate attesting to the necessity of building such a mill and permitting a write-off of most of its cost through a tax plan which allowed it to be depreciated within a five-year period rather than extended over the customary 20. Since, under the terms of the certificate, the ground for the new plant had to be broken by May 10, 1951, the legislature had to grant to an agency of the state government the right of eminent domain to assure the acquisition of the property within the specified period. There was strong support for the plan, including that of organized labor and veterans' organizations. The opposition to the authorization by the citizens of the Waterford area, where it was suggested that the mill would be located, was best expressed by the former Lieutenant Governor, the former Trinity professor, the Pulitzer Prize winner, Odell Shephard, who observed that "a steel mill here would be like a cancer—it just doesn't fit."

The opponents of the plan gained a tactical advantage when rumors began to spread that the consulting engineers engaged to study the economic feasibility did not support the plan. The Governor had been in possession of the engineers' report since March 5, but, as requested by Clifford Strike, refused to make it public. Strike was the Chairman of the Governor's Steel Advisory Committee and President of the New England Steel Development Corporation, a subsidiary of the New England Council which had initiated the idea of a steel mill in New England. The motives of this gentleman, who was also President of the F. H. McCraw Construction Company which was favored to construct the mill, were suspect. When he refused to discuss the contents of the report on March 6, and when the report was finally released on March 8 and then hastily withdrawn, the suspicions of the members of the Assembly increased. Newspaper reporters who had seen the report were hastily summoned to discuss it, providing they agreed not to publish information concerning it. One reporter, who would not agree to such restrictions, did not attend the conference and published the essence of the report, which revealed that the consensus of the investigators was that the disadvantages outweighed the advantages. This was bitterly disappointing to the New England Steel Development Corporation. In a vain attempt to alter the conclusions of the engineering firm, more information was furnished, pressure was exerted, and harsh words were exchanged, but the revised report of April 20 was only slightly altered. Whereupon the New England Corporation engaged the services of another engineering firm to check on the findings of the first.

The members of the legislature and the public were completely lost in the arguments exchanged between the two firms. Meanwhile, the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, which was regarded as the most likely of the steel companies to operate in Connecticut, had been studying the details of the proposition and announced on April 26 that it was not interested in the Connecticut project. The next day there was made public a study which revealed the tremendous adjustments which needed to be made in the communities in Eastern Connecticut if a steel mill were located there. The bill granting the necessary right to eminent domain was never reported out of committee. The certificate of necessity was renewed several times, but on August 11, 1952, it was permitted to expire with the

notation that the time was not then propitious but that it was believed that eventually New England would have its own steel mill.²

Further Efforts to Alter State Government

Even in the proposals for the reorganization of the state government which Lodge supported at least moderately, his own party went against his leadership. The reform of county government, a ban on dual job holding, the redistricting of the Senate, and the reduction and the equalization of the House of Representatives were reforms which Lodge believed could possibly be achieved despite the "accommodation" made necessary by the war. The ban against legislators holding positions as judges of probate, trial judges, or prosecutors was a step in the right direction, but there remained loopholes which continued to provide members of the assembly with many opportunities. A measure was also enacted which granted a greater degree of home rule to the communities. In 1951, as previously, any attempt to alter the ancient and outmoded structure of government became hopelessly lost in the political maneuvering of the parties and their individual members. The Democrats sought to take the initiative on reorganization by passing in the Senate their own bill which called for the establishment of seven new departments and a thorough study of county government. The sincerity of their opposition to the proposed Agricultural Department, however, might be questioned. They claimed that the provision which required that the Governor select this commissioner from a list of three names submitted by a commission challenged the appointive power of the Governor. The *Courant* accurately pointed out that the method was the same as that suggested by the Organization Commission in Bowles Administration for the selection of the Commissioner of Education. Of similarly doubtful purpose was the Republican proposal to rewrite the constitution. The idea had value within itself, but any implication that such a procedure would answer the need for reorganization was a palpable absurdity. Near the end of the session, the *Hartford Courant* urged the Governor to exert his leadership to rescue at least a portion of the reorganization proposals, particularly as they pertained to the overhaul of the fiscal structure. Despite the Governor's appeals, the House rejected the proposal to reduce the House of Representatives to one representative from each town by a vote of 139 to

102. Then, in an effort to achieve the last bit of political advantage, the Republicans passed a bill for redistricting the Senate which in turn was defeated in the Democratic controlled Senate. The parties then turned to what has become so characteristic of any proposal for reorganization that there might be justification in concluding that what followed was the primary objective of any such proposal—to permit each party to accuse the other of being responsible for the failure of the legislation.³

The Loyalty Oath Issue

In one respect the 1951 Assembly was at least as notable for what it did not do as for what it did. The Governor in his inaugural address had held out the dread fear of Communism. He charged that there were 1000 card-carrying Communists in the state in addition to a considerable number of fellow travelers. Although the Governor admitted that he was “not in a position to say that any state employee is subversive,” he conferred with the FBI and the State Police on the subject. It was reported on May 4 that plans were afoot to rout the reds out of government, and it was suggested that a loyalty oath might be required. The special objects of the Governor’s concern were those so-called sensitive areas closely allied with the well-being of the public. If a law requiring a special oath of state employees were enacted, it was suggested that it might be extended to cover employees of towns and local governments. It seems ironic indeed that the issue which was to be so effective in the 1952 Presidential campaign, in which the Governor was to play so important a part, failed to incite the Connecticut legislators into frenzied action. In contrast to the general climate, calmness prevailed, and it was judged that no greater loyalty could be required than that of sworn allegiance to the Constitution.⁴

The Political Balance

The Governor’s prestige as a political leader shrank even lower when he was forced to accept the Democrats version of the budget. The Republicans had campaigned on economy and the Governor had spoken at some length about austerity. Yet he asked for \$242,000,000 to operate the state exclusive of the highway fund. The party which does not bear the responsibility for running the affairs of the state is always the most vocal

about saving money. Now it was the Democrats turn to express surprise at what they described as the highest budget in history. "With careful study," John Bailey "was sure that millions could be saved." The stage was set for a bitter fight when the Republican members of the Appropriation Committee introduced, apparently without the knowledge of the Democrats, their version of the budget. Despite repeated talk of economy, it was only slightly less than that recommended by the Governor. The Democrats countered with a recommendation calling for expenditures of \$214,000,000. The Governor sought to gain support for his program by charging that the cuts affected most the unfortunate of the state, particularly the aged and the mentally ill. There was little hope. It was announced two days before adjournment that the Republicans were accepting the Democrats' budget. Most Republicans expressed the view that the budget would result in a deficit, but judged this preferable to a special session which they regarded as inevitable if they did not acquiesce. This circumstance was not avoided, however, because of an apparent oversight which resulted in the failure to grant authorization for the extension of Civil Defense.⁵

Doom was forecast for the Republican Party by Jack Zaiman in a series of articles in the *Hartford Courant* in June, 1951. "The Republicans have been operating in this state," he wrote, "on the theory that this is a Republican state and always will be. . . . But this is not true. The only thing that is safe from now on is the Republican House." He added that if it were not for Fairfield County, the state would already be Democratic. He roundly scored the GOP for its ineffectual efforts, particularly in the last session. In extending the sales tax, he charged, it became identified as the party of high taxes. It followed Democratic leadership in approving the sale of oleomargarine and natural gas and in increasing the limitation on bond issues for the construction of rental housing from 65 to 115 million dollars. The Democrats, he believed, had completely taken the play from the Republicans who had failed to convince labor that the Republican Party offered support. Injury had been added by the failure of the Governor's office to extend the proper courtesies to labor leaders. Mr. Zaiman directed his most pointed barbs at the Governor's aloofness from politics. "Completely disregarded," he said, "was the basic and fundamental fact that the Connecticut legislature and every other

legislature is governed by politicians." The idea was growing that the Governor "must be concerned with the welfare of the Republican Party and not solely with the welfare of John Lodge." On the other hand, Zaiman did not need to instruct John Bailey in the arts of politics. To Bailey these were as natural as life. He had grown up in politics in Hartford; and during the five years he had been state Chairman, the Democratic Party had made its greatest strides in history.⁶

As the Democrats proceeded to build an aggressive political machine, the Republicans became involved in a bitter intra-party conflict which ultimately all but wrecked the Republican Party. The city of Hartford had contributed significantly to the Democratic state victory in 1948, and the Democratic plurality in the city was almost enough to reelect Bowles in 1950. The poor showing of the Citizen's Charter Committee in the municipal election of 1951 was the signal for the Democrats to attempt to strengthen the city's Democratic machine in the hope that Hartford would continue to accord the Democrats a 25,000 plurality in state and national elections.⁷ There was precipitated an internecine fight within the Republican party which shook it to its very foundations. The object of the attack was a politician's politician, a jovial Irishman who exacted and extended strong loyalties, the Republican National Committee man William H. Brennan. The patronage dealing of this old line politician was distasteful to the Governor reared in the tradition of Boston Puritanism. With the assistance of Meade Alcorn, or, perhaps at his urging, an attack was begun on Brennan which flared into open conflict. He had supported Lodge, reluctantly perhaps, for Congress. Now, Brennan claimed, Lodge had forgotten who had started him in politics. The Governor brought all the forces of his office, and it would seem quite likely forces from without the state, to bear on the ouster of Brennan. Brennan was deposed and was replaced by former Governor Shannon, who resigned in a short while and was replaced by one of the architects of the plan, Meade Alcorn. The fight had national significance. Brennan was an avowed Taft supporter. Lodge and Alcorn on the other hand, jumped on the Eisenhower band wagon early. Their success in ousting Brennan cleared the way for them to deliver the Connecticut delegation to Eisenhower at the Republican National convention. From the date of the Brennan ouster, there were wide differences on party policy and pro-

grams, and agreements thereafter were more those of expediency than of principle.⁸

The Eisenhower sweep in 1952 enabled the Republicans to regain control of the Senate and thereby control of both houses of the State Legislature, but in this victory there were portents of future challenges to continued Republican control. For the first time, as a result of a constitutional amendment extending the term of the Governor to four years, there was not a gubernatorial election which ran concurrently with the Presidential contest. The effect of the national election on the election of state officers was thereby removed, but in turn the presidential campaign exerted a greater effect than before on the choice of the members of the General Assembly. In a contest in which Eisenhower secured a plurality of 129,362, the Republicans were successful in electing 22 of the 36 state Senators. It was of more significance that only four of these, one each from New Haven, Bridgeport, Waterbury, and New London, were from the larger cities. The importance of Hartford in state elections was emphasized by the fact that the only Democratic victor in the contests for congressional seats was Thomas Dodd who won the first district by virtue of 28,000 plurality in Hartford. The man who emerged from the election earmarked for bigger things was Abraham Ribicoff. He had not been counted among the party leaders as late as February, 1951, but the death of Senator McMahon gave him the opportunity to run for the Senate and to establish himself as a vote-getter on a statewide basis. He did not fail. Not only was Bush's plurality held to 28,960, but Ribicoff won his home county, Hartford, by a slightly greater plurality than Bush secured in Fairfield County, and even in losing the other counties Ribicoff demonstrated unmistakable voter strength. Of equal importance, perhaps, insofar as the Democratic party was concerned was that Ribicoff's plurality in Hartford County was 48,098 while that of Thomas Dodd in the same election was 23,540. Since they controlled both houses of the legislature the Republicans had the opportunity in the forthcoming Assembly to enact a legislative program which would appeal to the people and modify the future course of politics in the state.⁹

The Expressways

The 1953 Assembly might well be remembered as the one which

built expressways. In the post-war era emphasis was placed on relieving the congestion of heavily traveled roads and on the improvement of state highways in the urban communities. The most important of these were the completion of the Wilbur Cross Parkway and the completion of the tunnel through West Rock to connect the Wilbur Cross with the Merritt Parkway. Other expressways were added and included the Derby-Shelton, the East Hartford-Glastonbury, and the Hartford-Springfield. Improvements in urban areas included widening approaches to towns as Route 6A into Waterbury, and constructing routes to by-pass towns as the Route 9 By-pass in Middletown.

The Connecticut Turnpike was the special concern of the 1953 Assembly and the most dramatic of the efforts to provide highways for an ever increasing, motor-conscious population. The congestion on the Old Post Road had been relieved with the opening of the Merritt Parkway in 1938, but by 1952 traffic had again increased to the point where it equalled or exceeded the previous congestion. The state had been aware of this possibility, and in 1943 had authorized the Highway Commission to lay out and construct a highway in the vicinity of Route 1 from the New York state line to the Housatonic River. Authorization for the expenditures of funds for the highway, however, were withdrawn in 1945, and in 1947 the authority for planning was repealed. During the next four years numerous studies, including origin and destination surveys, were made by the Highway Department and by the cities and towns along the shore. The 1951 legislature authorized the Highway Commissioner "to plan, layout, and construct a highway in Fairfield county between the Connecticut-New York state line and the Housatonic River to relieve the congestion on Route One."

From the many studies which were made two alternate routes were advanced. One a shore route which followed in general Route One and the other an inland highway lying about eight miles north and parallel to Route One. In the effort to resolve the site issue, it was assumed that east-west traffic would approach 100,000 each day by 1970. It was recommended that there be built an all-purpose six-lane highway from New York to West Haven which would be of maximum benefit to the shore towns and at the same time maintain contact with the large industrial centers. The 1953 General Assembly authorized a bond issue of approxi-

mately 400 million dollars for the construction of what was initially called the Greenwich-Killingly Expressway. This 129-mile inland route was to follow the shore line from the New York boundary to the vicinity of Flanders and to extend northeasterly to Killingly.

The exhilaration felt by the personnel of the highway department showed through the drab and repressed official reports of the Department as progress was recorded on "the biggest unit in history" with "a greater number of problems and variety of problems than any previous undertaking of this kind." To complete the project within the four years allowed, the Highway Department was to a great extent transformed from an operating to a supervisory agency as architects, design consultants, and 27 contracting engineering firms were retained to speed the work. Construction was delayed somewhat by difficulties in acquiring title to land, and by the steel strike of 1956 and the cement strike of 1957, but turnpike facilities were available from Killingly to Greenwich on January 2, 1958. As a result of strong pressure from the residents of the eastern part of the state, the 1957 assembly authorized the expansion of the turnpike in that section to a four-lane divided highway and this work was completed by 1959.

The story of the turnpike can be told in tons of steel and concrete, in millions of dollars, in the 4,252 pieces of property acquired for right of way, in the anguish of homesteaders, in the profits of speculators, or in the contributions of contractors to political parties. To the engineer it was a dream offering technical accomplishment. To Connecticut it was a dream offering possible industrial development for the depressed Eastern section of the state. It illustrates the extraordinary effort presently required to maintain a highway system commensurate with the demands of an ever increasing and mobile population and the needs of a continually developing industrial community.¹⁰ It was the beginning of an extensive highway construction program which was to be undertaken in the state.

Public Higher Education

"Well up on the list" of the issues to be considered by the 1953 Legislature was that of centralizing the administration of the state insti-

tuitions of higher education. The state teachers' colleges had since their establishment been governed by the State Board of Education which was also concerned with public elementary and secondary education. The state university, on the other hand, was governed by a board of regents. The idea of centralization was not new. Unification had been suggested by the Commission on State Government Organization in 1950, the need for a more complete system of education was recognized in the 1951 report of the Commissioner of Education, and, the administrative structure of higher education was on the agenda of the conference of Governors in 1952. The most articulate expression of the suggestion, however, as it pertained to Connecticut, came from Albert N. Jorgensen, President of the University of Connecticut. There is no doubt that he believed in a single board of control for all state institutions of higher education, and, in a limitation upon the development of the teachers' colleges. "Any expansion of these colleges . . . will inevitably result in a disservice to the citizens of the state," he wrote in 1948. "The fact that public higher education is controlled through two completely independent boards means there is no legal procedure for the coordination of the programs of the various institutions." In words that Yankee legislators understood best, he argued that "because of their separate boards of control, the state institutions of higher education compete among themselves for supporting funds." The real impetus for the idea, however, was to be found in the history of public higher education in the state.¹¹

The unhappy fact was the State of Connecticut had neglected public higher education. The impetus for the expansion of the Agricultural College had come primarily from Federal legislation, which provided funds for expansion in the fields of agriculture and home economics. With the appointment of Albert N. Jorgensen as President in 1935 the college was destined to assume the status of a university. Yankee prudence prevailed, however. Approximately six thousand graduates of Connecticut high schools continued to go out of the state for their higher education and hundreds of other qualified Connecticut youth were denied any opportunity for post-secondary school training. The President of the University reported that before the war Connecticut ranked forty-fourth in the percentage of high school graduates going to college, both in and out of the state and in both public and private institutions.

Jorgensen assumed the task of educating the Connecticut public to the responsibility for providing higher education for all qualified Connecticut youth. The name of the school was changed to the University of Connecticut, effective July 1, 1939. The enrollment at Storrs, before the war, however, remained at approximately 2,000.

Meanwhile the teacher preparatory institutions lagged behind the standards set by areas outside New England. It was not until 1933 that the Normal School at New Britain was established as a Teachers College with authority to grant the B.S. degree in education. There, without increased appropriations for the new services, with stolid determination and enduring patience Herbert D. Welte introduced those changes which were to raise the college to a position of creditability among teachers colleges. Meanwhile the other teacher institutions were in constant danger of being eliminated. A normal school had been established at Willimantic in 1889, at New Haven in 1893, and in Danbury in 1905. The legislature in 1933 passed over the recommendation of the State Board of Finance and Control that the State Board of Education look to the establishment of one strong teacher training institution. When in 1939 Governor Baldwin made a similar proposal, friends of the institutions, all of which since 1937 had been designated teachers' colleges, made spirited protests, fearing the continuation of all the institutions, but on the customary subsistence budget. At the beginning of the war there remained four struggling institutions, the interest in which, except when their very existence was threatened hardly extended beyond those who were immediately concerned.¹²

In the post-war years the State of Connecticut came to recognize its responsibility for providing opportunities for higher education for the youth of the State. Most important in the realization of this necessity was the returning veteran, who tended to view higher education as a right rather than as a privilege, and the GI Bill which made it financially possible for many who previously had been denied the opportunity. In the mid-fifties, when the number of veterans decreased, the increases in population was reflected in the applications for college entrance. As out-of-state institutions became crowded, graduates of secondary schools found it increasingly difficult to gain admission, and citizens looked to the State to provide opportunities for their children. Then, too, the State

had been forced to abandon its pay-as-you-go policy in the financing of capital projects, and thereby was more willing to issue bonds for the construction of educational facilities. Albert N. Jorgensen educated the public to needs and cajoled the legislators for funds for the University. The Presidents of the four teachers' colleges, however, were discouraged from any direct communication with the Governor or the Legislature by the Commissioners of Education who were abysmally ineffective in stating the case for the teacher preparatory institutions. In the total responsibilities of the State Department of Education it would appear as if the colleges were considered comparatively unimportant. In the more than 130 pages devoted to the Reports of the Commissioner and the Board of Education from 1947 to 1953 only five per cent can be identified as pertaining specifically to the colleges, a percentage incidentally which remained relatively unchanged for the rest of the decade. It was Albert N. Jorgensen, then, who more than any other was responsible for determining Connecticut's attitude toward public higher education. While effectively presenting the needs of the University, he presented a bold educational philosophy which included, among others, the idea that students at a state supported institution could not be expected to finance the educational program or the educational buildings of the State and the concept that "State funds should be appropriated, as a matter of principle, only to institutions that are under State control." He believed, too, that "the State should define with clarity and precision the functions of the institutions which benefit from State appropriations."¹³

The bill to unite the establishments of higher education in the State would have brought "the most sweeping reform in education in the history of the State." The bill to create a Board of Regents would, in effect, have eliminated the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents of the University of Connecticut and would have transferred the training of secondary teachers from the Teachers College of Connecticut to the University of Connecticut. The plan was so bitterly opposed by the friends of the teachers' colleges as to force a second public hearing, and Jorgensen was so specifically identified as the architect of the plan that he found it necessary to appear at the second hearing to deny the charge. The proposal, however, included many features advocated earlier by the President of the University. He had been one of a committee in 1939

which recommended the transfer of secondary education, and in 1948 he had asked for the coordination of all of the programs of state institutions. Even so it is not clear that in accordance with his proposal the identity of the teachers' colleges would have been obliterated, though the colleges' own anomalous positions within the State Department of Education provided a basis for such fears. Jorgensen had written in 1948 that "democracy cannot afford to allow decisions as to educational offerings . . . to become stereotyped, nor to allow them to become the monopolistic prerogative of any particular group or agency." "Any form of centralization," he wrote, "which takes the center of gravity outside an institution is bad for all higher education in the State. . . ." It was then his announced hope to bring about "coordination without violating the principle of self-determination." Although it is not to be presumed that this is the last he had to say on the reorganization of higher education, it is correct to state that this proposal was not again suggested in one of his published reports. Ideas, once suggested, die slowly in Connecticut's legislature, and the recognition of the need for doing something about higher education in the state had persisted for twenty years. With Lodge's penchant for ignoring the heads of his departments, particularly when reenforced by the recommendations of the Governor's Conference, it is entirely possible that the idea was never checked with the President of the University. Whatever the merits of the plan, it was apparent that Lodge, like Baldwin, had aroused a political hornet's nest which might continue to swarm until election day. A method had to be found to enable the Governor to retreat gracefully from a program which he had recommended. As mentioned, a second hearing was held. Then it was apparently agreed that the bill would be passed in the Republican House with the tacit understanding that it would be killed in the Senate. It was. Only three Senators, two Republicans and one Democrat, voted for the bill. The proposal and its defeat perhaps was not without its effect on public higher education. It brought more forcefully to the attention of the public and imprinted upon the consciousness of the legislators the needs of the colleges at a time when the state was having to expand its facilities for higher education. Authorization was granted in 1955 to begin a graduate program in education at the teachers' colleges, and in 1959 the "teachers" was dropped from their respective names to signify the author-

ization to grant a Bachelor of Arts degree. The University meanwhile continued to add new schools, expand its graduate program, and to promote scholarly research. Meanwhile, the form, if not the substance, of cooperation between state institutions of higher learning was achieved by the creation of a Liaison Committee in 1955. The coordination of the services of the institutions of higher learning remained unresolved. Governor Ribicoff in 1960 gave faint utterances about a Department of Higher Education, utterances which leaders of both parties appeared in 1961 to act as if it had never been uttered.¹⁴

With the increased demands for higher education, other institutions developed and expanded. In the post-war years, junior colleges such as Hillyer and New Haven expanded into four-year institutions. Arnold College joined with an expanding Bridgeport University. Others, such as Mitchell and Quinnipiac colleges, began to assume a greater responsibility for the education of Connecticut youth. The most significant development, perhaps, was the combination of Hillyer College, the Hart College of Music, the Hartford Art School, and Ward School of Electronics to lay a basis for the University of Hartford. Under the leadership of Vincent B. Coffin, who assumed the position of Chancellor, the University quickly caught the imagination of the public. Contributions were solicited for a building program designed to locate all the colleges on a single campus. A beginning was made in assembling a faculty and in developing an academic program in the Arts and Sciences which hopefully would compare to that already established in music and the fine arts.¹⁵

Mental Health

National attention focused on the condition of mental hospitals throughout the country and resulted in Connecticut, in 1953, in the establishment of a separate Department of Mental Health. During the war years, conscientious objectors who had been assigned to mental hospitals became convinced that "a public could be aroused from its torpor if confronted by the full facts in all their sordid details." One of the first experiments conducted as a result of their efforts was that at the Connecticut State Mental Hospital in Middletown in 1944. There the hospital took newspaper reporters into its confidence. Then, as hospitals through-

out the country opened their doors to the press, the need for improved care and facilities was brought so forcibly to the attention of the public and its officials that it was a major subject of consideration of the Council on State Governments in 1949; and in 1953 Governor Lodge, acting on the recommendation of Connecticut's Legislative Council, recommended the Department of Mental Health. The governing body was a council of ten, with a Commissioner as the executive authority. To him was assigned general supervision over the three state hospitals and the Connecticut Child Study and Treatment Center. The principle of citizens' control of the affairs of the state was extended by the establishment of a Citizens Advisory Committee on Welfare.¹⁶

Taxes and Politics

As the day of adjournment approached, the Governor appeared to become embroiled with members of his own Party on the issue of tax increases. The Democrats had given Lodge a tight budget in 1951; and, in 1953, when there were services which were badly needed and which necessarily would cause an increase in taxes, the Democrats were in the strategic position of being able to blame the Governor for any increase. There would not be another scheduled session of the legislature before the gubernatorial election. The Legislative Finance Committee recommended a \$41,900,000 tax increase, which called for an increase in the sales tax from two to three per cent; an increase in the unincorporated business tax for two years from one to two dollars per thousand, for each thousand in excess of \$50,000; and an increase in the corporation tax for a period of two years from three to 3.7 per cent. The last was less than the four per cent requested by the Governor and he immediately challenged the Committee. Whether or not it was a bona fide fight, it was perhaps good politics for the Governor to identify himself with the average tax payer and insist on higher rates for the corporation. What was labeled "as a knock down drag out fight" between the Governor and the Committee, bears all the characteristics of a sham battle, particularly when the Senate supported the compromise tax plan which called for a rate of 3.75 per cent on corporations. Caught in the midst of a tax dilemma the Governor would have wished to appear as the champion of

the average man on the matter of taxes while building his case for reelection on the new services which were provided the citizens of the State.¹⁷

Republicans confidently believed that they had achieved such a program in 1953, and Lodge apparently had consolidated his strength within the party. In addition to the highway program, the improved welfare services, the creation of the Department of Mental Health, and the four dollar increase in state aid to education, there had been meaningful gains in the area of labor. The workmen's compensation benefits were increased to 40 dollars a week; and unemployment benefits, to 30 dollars a week. The authorization of bond issues of \$12,000,000 for institutional expansion and the \$1,250,000 for the University of Connecticut and the \$500,000 for the teachers' colleges provided for additional needed facilities. The increase of the Superior Court judges from 20 to 25 and of those of the Courts of Common Pleas from 10 to 12 not only constituted a step toward relieving the courts, but also afforded an opportunity to strengthen the patronage ties within the party. Then, too, the party was riding the crest of the popularity of a Republican President and the end of the Korean War. The State was on the brink of a new period of prosperity as a result of the stimulus of more than three and one-fourth billion dollars in war contracts which the State Development Commission reported had come into the state by December, 1952. In recognition of the services which they had rendered, veterans' benefits were extended to Korean veterans. Lodge's position seemed enhanced as a result of his capturing leadership of the Young Republicans which had been a stronghold of the Brennan faction of the party.¹⁸

It was, nevertheless, not an unblemished record. It was charged that at times the lawmakers had irresponsibly refused to make some reforms for which Connecticut had a pressing need. Although there might have been political risks involved, the *Courant* no doubt would have placed in that category the failure to reorganize the State's educational structure. There would seem to have been political advantage to be gained in accepting the proposal to extend aid to neglected and dependent children. The women of the state had mobilized in support of the bill and the Hartford *Courant* reversed its own stand and suggested the extraordinary procedure that the vote not only be by roll call, but that those

voting against the proposal be asked to state their reasons. Nonetheless the proposal was shunted aside for more study, a favorite method of those who wish to block legislation. The reason given by Jerome Beatty, the Chairman of the Welfare Committee, was that the measure would have cost \$3,200,000. John Dempsey charged that "the interests of the children were sold out to purchase votes for the Governor's high tax program."¹⁹

The Party's own sense of respectability was shaken by allegations that persons high in the counsel of the Party were involved in attempts at shakedown and bribery which had accompanied the passage of the fireworks legislation in the previous session of the Assembly. It was found that a law passed in 1951, purportedly designed to make fireworks safe for Connecticut residents, not only was notoriously ineffective, but by outlawing all larger salutes except those of a specific dimension gave a monopoly to one Connecticut manufacturer. When collusion was charged, a special investigating committee began to turn up evidence that was to implicate former members of the Assembly, but none who were then in a high position. The allegations then were declared "without foundation."²⁰ Appearances suffered further when, in the last days of the 1953 session, four bills turned up missing in the Senate, lost or stolen.

The Assembly was "at times rebellious." The Republican legislature had "thumbed its nose" at the leadership and had turned down the proposal to decrease the size of the House only to be embarrassed later when the Party's neatly contrived method of redistricting the Senate, from which so much had been expected politically, was declared unconstitutional on the grounds that it had not been accomplished at the session next after the year of the census of the United States. The *Courant* reminded the law-makers that the Assembly would continue to turn in bad jobs until it was brought up to date. The decision to rewrite the constitution was slight balm for those who believed in a major alteration of the state's government. The Assembly, the *Courant* concluded, was not "destined to go down in history as one of the better ones." In evaluating Lodge, himself, however the journal recognized that he still suffered from the aloofness he had practiced and that he might have profited by calling in the heads of his departments while the budget was being prepared, but the paper contended that except for the "soak the rich tax

policy" that which "Lodge stood for makes sense and is good for Connecticut."²¹

The 1954 Campaign

The parties patched and realigned their forces in preparation for the 1954 campaign. Until the very eve of the election, this proceeded unspectacularly providing the voters with practically no issues upon which to make a decision. Despite the gains which Lodge might have made within the party, the Brennan-Zeller group was still to be reckoned with if the party were to hope for success in November. The bitter party struggle could not be settled by a proverbial "wave of the hand," but an accord was reached, after prolonged discussion, on the eve of the nominating convention. Lodge headed the ticket. To Charles Jewett of the "new guard" went the nomination for Lieutenant Governor, and to Zeller of the "old" went that of Comptroller. The rest of the ticket was chosen with similar political discretion. In the nominee for Secretary of State, Mildred Allen, the gracious wife of the incumbent Lieutenant Governor, the Republican Party had chosen one who exerted a quieting influence on warring politicians. What had happened to Connecticut politics was dramatically revealed when the electorate was asked to choose between the "middle way" of the Republicans and the "middle of the road approach" of the Democratic candidate. The trend of political conviction during the preceding four years had unmistakably moved away from the post-war New Dealism of Chester Bowles. John Bailey sensed in the split of the Republican Party an opportunity for victory. He tapped for the Democratic nomination one who had "always been acceptable to the conservatives of the Republican Party and popular with the members of his own." This was Abraham Ribicoff, who, although he had lost, had revealed great vote-getting strength in the 1952 Senatorial campaign.

Ribicoff's election as Congressman from the First District in 1948 was his first in other than city elections, but he had learned his practical lessons of politics as a member of Connecticut's House of Representatives and as Judge of Hartford Police Court. Sincere in appearance, persuasive in speech, decisive in action, he possessed the rare ability to grasp an idea and simultaneously evolve the mechanisms for its achievement.

Ribicoff's pattern of political success was to talk as a conservative and to vote as a liberal. This native of New Britain could meet with equal ease his former neighbors of Hartford Avenue or his future neighbors from Prospect Avenue in Hartford. He was, significantly, Bailey's friend. To a degree greater than was then realized, he sensed the climate of political opinion in Connecticut in the mid-twentieth century. He carried the campaign indefatigably to traditional Republican towns where he made more friends. Issues were almost non-existent during the campaign. Governor Lodge ran on his record, promised to ferret out sabotage, and was mildly defensive of the mental health program enacted in the last session of the Assembly. Ribicoff's proposals were no more imaginative. He suggested placing the Athletic Commission under the State Police Commission and the creation of a new Department of Commerce to assist in attracting industry to the state. One of the longest and dreariest campaigns in history was drawing to a laborious end when there occurred an incident which aroused the electorate.²²

The electorate was asked to decide if the "American Dream" were still alive. Ribicoff told a group of Italian-Americans in Berlin that the election would show "whether any boy, regardless of race, creed, or color has the right to aspire to public office." John Bailey added, "If we elect Ribicoff it may well be that a Governor of Italian-American extraction will be elected in the next decade." Clarence Baldwin was mildly surprised to read that "the Democratic party had a monopoly on the people who believed in the American dream." It was on Thursday before election day that the "American dream" was made into a central issue when John McGuire, formerly Democratic State Chairman, announced on television his support for Lodge. McGuire had been defeated by John Gartland in the contest for nomination for Congress from the third district, had contested the votes from New Haven, had taken the case to court, and had lost. It is entirely possible that McGuire's announcement had been arranged well in advance and that it was intended to indicate merely lack of support for Ribicoff, but McGuire went beyond the endorsement of the Republican candidate. He lashed out at Ribicoff for interjecting "the racial and religious issue in the campaign" and concluded by pleading with the voters not to permit Bailey and Ribicoff "to turn the American dream into a political night-

mare." Ribicoff had his issue. The next night before a state-wide television audience, he played the role of the persecuted. "Ever since I was nominated for Governor," he said, "there have been ugly rumors and ugly whispers, things that would cut you to the quick. . . . It has been a vicious whispering campaign against the Democratic candidate." In a dramatic conclusion, he flourished the "American dream" again, and then asked the audience, "Is anything wrong with that statement? Isn't it America at its best?" The effect was electric. It was charged at the time that the calumny had been planted and staged. Later, a newspaper of a minority group characterized Ribicoff's campaign as "one of the crassest appeals to racial bigotry in the history of American politics." A reading of the press reports of that evening in Berlin, October 24, 1954, might lead one to conclude that the Democratic leaders protested too vigorously of the vicious attack. One could hardly believe that the Republican party would not have measured more accurately the impact of McGuire's attack. Whether McGuire made the attack on his own, or not, he could hardly have been of greater service to the Democratic party.²³

The election results revealed the effectiveness of Ribicoff's campaign and of the defection within the Republican ranks. As the votes came in, it was clear that Lodge was being cut in the small towns. The Republican ticket was running ahead, but not the Governor. Premature joy in Republican circles turned to gloom as the final returns gave Ribicoff a margin of 3,115. This was interpreted as a personal victory for him. The success illustrated anew the effectiveness of an appeal to prejudice in garnering votes. Ribicoff's election was all the more remarkable in that the Republicans elected every other candidate on the state ticket. John Bailey emerged from the election in a stronger position than ever. Jack Zaiman pointed out that the failure of John Golden to return a Democratic majority in New Haven of no more than 7,000 weakened the position of the National Chairman while the 25,500 plurality in Hartford indicated Bailey's strength. A close working relation was anticipated between Bailey and Ribicoff in the forthcoming Assembly. As the Governor awaited its opening, he announced that he would get along with the Republican House.²⁴

NOTES—CHAPTER XXXVI

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3. *Journal of the House*, Jan., 1951, p. 42; *Public Acts*, 1951, 9, 338; *Hartford Courant*, May 12, 13, June 1, 2, 5, 1951, May 8, 1953.
4. *Ibid.*, May 4, 1951; *Journal of the House*, Jan., 1951, p. 33.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 312; *Hartford Courant*, Feb. 2, June 1, 5, 7, 18, 1951.
6. *Ibid.*, June 18, 1951, Nov. 7, 1954; *Public Acts*, 1951, pp. 5, 169, 341.
7. *Hartford Courant*, Nov. 11, 18, 1951.
8. *Ibid.*, Nov. 18, 1951, May 21, 24, 25, 26, 28, 1952, Oct. 31, 1954.
9. *Register and Manual*, State of Connecticut, 1954, pp. 393-433; *Hartford Courant*, Feb. 18, 1941, Aug. 24, Sept. 6, 7, 1952.
10. H. W. Lochner & Co., "A Plan for the Solution of the Post Road Congestion Problem," v-vii, Chicago, 1952), pp. 1-3; Reports of the Highway Department, *Digest of Connecticut Administrative Reports to the Governor*, 1947-60; *Public Acts*, 1953, p. 545; *Public Acts*, 1957, p. 834; *Hartford Courant*, Nov. 11, 1951, May 22, 31, 1953).
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12. Report of the University of Connecticut, *Digest of Administrative Reports*, 1947-48 (Hartford, 1948), pp. 486-516; Herbert E. Fowler, *A Century of Teacher Education in Connecticut* (New Britain, 1949) pp. 68-73, 79-99; Report of the Board of Finance and Control, (Hartford, 1933), p. 20; *Hartford Courant*, May 5, June 8, 10, 1939.
13. Reports of the Board and Commissioner of Education, 1947-60, *Digest of Administrative Reports*, 1947-60; Reports of the University of Connecticut, *Digests of Administrative Reports*, 1947-60.
14. Fowler, *Century of Teacher Education*, p. 94; Reports of the University of Connecticut, *Digest of Administrative Reports*, 1947-60; Reports of the Board and Commissioner of Education, *Digest of Administrative Reports*, 1947-60; *Hartford Courant*, May 14, 16, 20, 22, 26, 1953; *Public Acts*, 1955; *Public Acts*, 1959, p. 754.
15. *Hartford Courant*, March 26, May 19, June 2, 1953.

16. *Public Acts*, 1953, 595, 664; *Hartford Courant*, May 6, 29, 1953; Nina Ridenour, *Mental Health in the United States, A Fifty-Year History* (Cambridge, Mass. 1961,) pp. 77, 104-10.
17. *Hartford Courant*, May 9, 19, 20, 23, 24, 29, 31, 1953; *Public Acts*, 1953, pp. 590, 651, 680.
18. *Public Acts*, 1952, pp. 40, 111, 336, 354, 488; *Hartford Courant*, May 12, 15, 20, 31, 1953.
19. *Ibid.*, May 20, 25, 29, 1953.
20. *Ibid.*, July 7, 14, 1951, June 30, 1952, Apr. 14, 1953, May 15, 1953; *Hartford Times*, July 6, 7, 1951, June 30, 1952, May 4, 1953.
21. *Ibid.*, May 3, 20, 31, 1953; *Public Acts*, 1953, p. 23.
22. *Hartford Courant*, July 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, Oct. 22, 26, 28, 29, Nov. 3, 4, 6, 7, 1953.
23. *Ibid.*, Oct. 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, Nov. 4, 1954; The Washington (D. C.) *Afro-American* quoted in the *Middletown Press*, March 12, 1962.
24. *Hartford Courant*, Nov. 4, 6, 7, 10, 14, 1954.

Chapter XXXVII

“The Middle of the Road”

THE JOB of governing,” Ribicoff asserted, “. . . has been placed on the shoulders of both political parties” by the decision of the people of the state on election day. Thus he indicated, in his first inaugural address, the policy which was to characterize his attitude toward the Republican party during his entire tenure of office. He reminded the assemblage that “divided elections do contain a mandate,—a mandate to cooperate . . . to search for areas of common agreement, to share credit.” He operated upon the assumption, he said “that neither Republicans nor Democrats have a monopoly on virtue or wisdom.” As the session developed and many issues remained unresolved the *Courant* was ready to write off the Governor’s call for cooperation with the observation that there was no substitute for leadership. The Republicans, however, paid tribute to him for “not trying to force his views on the legislature . . . for letting the legislature do its own work by itself.” Inasmuch as ideologically the parties were not far apart, his tactics made Ribicoff an elusive political target and were well calculated to appeal to those who traveled “the middle of the road.”¹

A Moderate Legislative Program

The meaning of moderation in public affairs was illustrated in the policies that were adopted concerning the assessment and collection of rates charged legally liable persons for those who were residents of the state’s humane institutions. The question of institutional rates had been of some concern to the Legislative Council since 1948, but the idea persisted that those who could afford to pay for institutional care should do so. In response to public demands, the Council in 1954 studied

the question and recommended the elimination from the charges of expenses for items, such as education and training, generally borne by the public, and the elimination of grandparents from those to be held legally liable. The actual amount that a liable person would pay was, as previously, to be determined by his financial ability. On the other hand, during his campaign and in his inaugural, Ribicoff had advocated "the removal of compulsory payments." In his recommended budget he provided for the \$7,000,000 estimated to be required for the state to assume full responsibility. The Republicans countered with a proposal identified as the "Fair Care Bill," which included the essential features of the recommendations of the Council. When the bill reached the Senate, it was denounced as the "foul care bill" and was amended to fix the maximum charges at \$18.75 per week. The amendment was ultimately accepted with the proviso that it should expire August 31, 1956.²

In granting aids and benefits to citizens and towns, the Assembly proceeded within the areas of agreement of the two Parties. Without controversy, the granting of bonuses to Korean veterans was extended and greater job security for public school teachers was provided. An increase of \$180 in each of the years of the biennium was granted to state employees after the Republicans made a play for a greater increase. The Democrats went along with a \$21 across the board increase in state aid to education in return for Republican agreement on the tax program. The maximum benefits for unemployment compensation was increased to \$35 a week. The Democrats accepted the Republican proposal to end rent controls on March 31, 1956 and explained that their acceptance was to avoid an immediate end to these controls. Responsibility for the care of neglected and dependent children was transferred to the state. The administration of this program, which had been the responsibility of the counties for years, had become of particular concern to the welfare workers in the state.³ A proposal to transfer responsibility to the state had failed in 1953, it was said, because of the expense to the state. In 1955, however, the transfer was made with little discussion. The growth of Hartford as the center of the state's business was recognized in the establishment of the Hartford Bridge Authority and its authorization to construct and to operate five bridges in the Greater Hartford area. The proposal to establish a State Department of Com-

merce, which was one of Ribicoff's campaign proposals, was given short shrift by the Assembly. In the opinion of the *Hartford Courant*, this was just as well, inasmuch as the state, it implied, had not erected a tax structure which would attract industry.⁴

Efforts were made by the Assembly to legislate moral standards for Connecticut society and to bring certain social practices into conformity with those in other states. As a result of an extended newspaper campaign, the display and distribution of comic books portraying crime, horror, and sex to any one under eighteen years of age was made punishable by fine and imprisonment, thus tightening the existent censorship provision. In contrast, the prohibition against all gambling was relieved when games of chance were authorized when conducted by religious, charitable, or benevolent institutions. This raffles bill, as it was popularly known, had passed both houses in 1951, but an avalanche of criticism was heaped upon the lawmakers and Lodge was pressed to veto the bill. "The art of compromise can never be rightfully applied," the *Courant* editorialized, "when a moral principle is involved. . . . It would be unfortunate . . . if Governor Lodge should succumb to all the miggling little groups who have high pressured this bill along the road to passage." The bill was vetoed in 1951 and in 1953 the House killed a similar proposal. The vote of those who did not walk out crossed party lines in 1955 when the bill was finally passed. The legislators also considered the question of capital punishment, but were unwilling to follow the lead of other states in abolishing this punishment.⁵

To finance the increasing cost of government, the taxing program had to be stabilized and extended. Over \$50,000,000 was needed in new revenue for the existent general fund operations and to provide the new programs recommended by the Governor. The gasoline tax was increased from four to six cents on the gallon. The corporation and unincorporated taxes were continued, as was the sales tax inasmuch as there was not then an acceptable substitute. To assure the requisite revenue, the Administration had to enforce party discipline to prevent the reduction of taxes on insurance companies. The insurance companies, it was held, during the depression had voluntarily submitted to a high tax, and it had been continued during the war. After 1945, the insurance companies had been gradually relieved by the Assembly so that they

had succeeded in securing a reduction in their tax on interest and dividends from six per cent to two and one-half per cent by 1955. It was proposed in 1955 to reduce the tax still further and to provide for it to reach one-half of one per cent in 1959 and to continue at that rate thereafter. The Republican House approved the bill. The Democratic margin in the Senate was reduced by one on this bill for the rather obvious reason that Philip Laing, a Windsor Democrat, was an employee of Aetna. His fellow Democrats listened to his charge that they had been "whipped in line" and blocked the bill on a roll call vote of 18 to 17. A bill to reduce the tax on premiums and annuities from one to one-half per cent met the same fate.⁶

The Primary Law

Of all the legislative proposals, that one which was of most concern to political leaders was the primary bill. Any such law it was feared, would diminish their control. Connecticut was the only state in the union which did not have some form of primary law, although fifteen of the states held primaries only for candidates for local offices. In the absence of a primary law, a number of Connecticut municipalities used the primary for the selection of candidates for municipal elections. There had been sufficient dissatisfaction with the caucus method of nominating candidates that both parties had advocated in their platforms the enactment of a direct primary law. The recommendations of the Legislative Council, however, were a far cry from a general primary law. The Council's proposal, which would have confined the primary to the election of members of the General Assembly and to that of candidates for local office, perhaps represented the extent to which party leaders wished to support the arrangement. Despite this lack of enthusiasm, largely as a result of the efforts of the Committee on Elections, a bill was reported for action. The skirmishes which had been going on behind the scenes flared into open battle when the bill came up for a vote in the House. A measure of support was gained from the Republican leadership on the assumption that such a bill would lessen the strength of William Brennan, who it was feared might control the Party's convention the next year. Thomas Dodd, then Congressman from the First District, who did

not always see eye-to-eye with the Bailey-Ribicoff leadership, had gone on record by telegram as favoring the bill. Other leaders threw their influence into the contest. Ribicoff called it a “bad bill” which would promote “skullduggery and black mail.” The House passed the bill 169 to 73. The Democratic leadership now faced the problem of holding the Senate in line, and there were defections. Duane Lockard, the Chairman of the Elections Committee, favored the bill as did one of two other Senators. The proposition had aroused such public interest and the attempts “to-amend-it-to-death” had become so obvious that, in the opinion of Lockard, a Professor of Political Science at Connecticut College, the Party could not afford to be charged with the defeat of the bill. John Bailey, who had always been less than enthusiastic about the proposal, reversed his position and convinced the Democratic Senators that they should support it. Ribicoff announced that he would sign the bill. Connecticut secured a primary law, but not one which gravely endangered the organization’s control of the nominating machinery on a town, district, or state level. Ironically, the new privilege was coupled with a provision that in any town over 5,000 in population the Party caucus could be eliminated in which case the town committee selected the local candidates and named its own members. The town committee could not assume responsibility for one of these functions alone, the two were inseparable parts of the alternative to the caucus. The town committee was thus relieved of the responsibility to the members of its Party implicit in the caucus requirement and in addition became self-perpetuating. Recourse from its decisions as to its own composition and as to its nominees could be had only through a primary challenge, a poor substitute and not synonymous with an opportunity for member participation in decision. The opportunity for participation provided by the caucus may not have been exercised, but it required a cynical estimate of the quality of the citizen not to expect that its elimination would be recognized as a palpable disregard for democratic processes and an egoistic arrogation of political responsibility. Nonetheless, in the towns in Connecticut with more than 5,000 population, the caucus method has been retained by Democratic and by Republican groups. To balance against this, the primary opportunity has been used sparingly in municipal contests and in the selection of candidates for the Assem-

bly. To challenge a nominee endorsed by a Party at a district or state convention required the challenger to have received on one of the ballots 20 per cent of the delegate votes, submitted a petition signed by a specified number of party members, and paid a filing fee equal to five per cent of the salary of the position for which he challenged the nomination. Its only effect in the selection of candidates for state or national offices seems to have been to have forced some compromise in an effort to avoid a primary. The only formal challenge for a state or national position was made in 1956 when the Democrat, Paul Amenta, a Senator from New Britain in the previous state Assembly, challenged Patrick Ward of Hartford, who had been nominated in the Democratic Convention as the candidate in the First Congressional District. Amenta's experience, rather than proving the efficacy of the primary, attested to the strength of the organization. Early in the campaign he gained a considerable popular following, but as the date for the primary approached his strength fell away rapidly. The 46 per cent vote which he attracted serves as a reminder of the hazards of the primary; and Amenta, an object lesson in what ambitious young politicians were not to do if they wish to progress within the Party.⁷

Breakdown in the Legislative Process

The Assembly seemed to proceed at a comparatively orderly pace until the last days of the session, then bedlam broke loose, and there resulted what veteran political observers described as "the worst example of law making" they could remember. The excessive trading was at the root of the situation. Bills having no relation were traded, an education bill for a road, a primary bill for a judgeship. In the wild scramble the last night of the session, the power of decision passed to the relatively few leaders. Bills of great importance were approved "with a wink of the eye," a half dozen or more unrelated bills were passed with a voice vote with only their numbers being read. Lobbyists crowded into both chambers and the public packed the galleries. Leaders of both parties were responsible. As they sought to gain political advantage, they held up bills of importance to society and contributed to an impossible situation. In addition, the effective leadership of the

Republican Party fluctuated. It had shifted in the middle of the term. With Meade Alcorn out of the state, the Brennan forces exerted a greater and greater influence in legislative decisions, and there were rumblings in the corridors that he was about ready to seize control of the party. At the end of the session, Alcorn returned, the signals were changed and a number of positions, assumed to have been decided, were reversed. As the clock approached midnight, with less than five minutes remaining before the constitutional deadline for adjournment, the leaders of the House were screaming into their microphones for the Clerk of the House to read out the numbers of the tax bills. Their efforts were futile. The Speaker banged his gavel. The session was adjourned *sine die*. The Assembly had not voted the monies necessary to run the government, and in his address to the Assembly the Governor called a special session to remedy this specific requirement. The failure to have made financial provision pointed to basic structural flaws and focused attention on these problems and possible corrections. The tax bill had been in possession of the Chairman of the Finance Committee who explained that he had not had time to prepare the bills. Republicans blamed Democrats and they blamed Republicans. “The only answer,” said Charles Jewett, the Lieutenant Governor, is “to have people elected who will be responsible to the people and not to political bosses.” Lockard, somewhat in embarrassed retrospection, it would seem, described the rank and file of the Assembly as “dazed, unspeakably tired, and confused.” It was agreed that reforms were necessary. The Clerk of the House was of the opinion that the difficulty could have been avoided if the outmoded method of handling bills were revised. The Connecticut Public Expenditure Council recommended that the Assembly meet once each year, and that the budget be presented at least ten days before the adjournment of the Assembly. Changes were made in 1957. Lobbyists were properly excluded from the floor of both Houses when they were in session, a more orderly procedure was provided for legislation which made it more difficult to “lose” bills, and a date was fixed beyond which bills other than those concerning appropriations, or of an emergency nature could be introduced. Whereas the changes went a long way toward correcting those conditions which had made law makers appear ludicrous in the public view, the alterations were not fundamental.¹⁸

1955 Floods

The quiet of the Summer which followed the adjournment of the Assembly was interrupted by the havocs of nature. The hurricane Dianne released torrential rains on Connecticut on the night of August 18-19. In the West, the Mad, the Still, and the Naugatuck rivers swelled out of bounds, their waters raced through the cities and towns leaving death and destruction in their wake. In the East the Quinnebaug endangered towns, and in Hartford the Park River caused severe damages. Eighty lives were lost and another 200 persons were seriously injured, with 15,000 families suffering from the flood. There were 668 homes destroyed and another 2,460 were so damaged as to require major repairs. Estimates of damages by 507 industrial firms amounted to 88 million dollars and those of 1,436 commercial establishments to \$36,000,000, while 922 farms estimated their losses at \$2,500,000. Cities such as Winsted and Putnam were in disastrous condition. The State had only begun to recover when the waters of a second flood swirled through 60 communities causing additional heavy damage in 39 of these which had suffered from the August disaster.

To assist in recovery organized relief agencies, such as the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army, added their efforts to those of the neighbors of the sufferers, and the Federal Small Business Administration added its resources to those of the local banks. To this was added the assistance of the State. At a special session, the legislature petitioned Congress to inaugurate a flood control program. The first of the series of dams designed to control the waters of the rivers was completed at Thomaston in 1961. The legislature also voted \$15,500,000 for repairs to state highways and bridges and \$14,500,000 for local roads and bridges. State monies were provided to supplement federal funds available for redevelopment, surplus housing was made available to devastated areas, and towns which suffered tax losses were reimbursed. To finance the program, the sales tax was increased one-fourth of one per cent and cigarette and liquor taxes were increased for a nine-month period. Even with this assistance, the major problem of restoration rested with the citizens of the state; and although the process necessarily continued for a number of years, the major scars of the disasters began to disappear in a surprisingly short time.⁹

Politics 1956-1957

The Eisenhower victory in 1956¹⁰ was so complete as to sweep into office Republicans at all levels. Such majorities were returned in the General Assembly as to make it possible for the GOP to achieve a legislative record which would appeal to the voters of the state and make victory possible in 1958. The 31 to 5 majority in the Senate and the 249 to 30 majority in the House were more than enough to override any vetoes of the Governor. The Democratic leaders, however, gave them little out of which they could make an issue. The Governor at the opening of the session extolled the spirit of moderation which characterized the first years of his administration, reminded the Assembly members that this spirit did not "press a partisan advantage to its bitter end," and invited the Houses with their huge majorities to continue in the same cooperative spirit. He outlined his legislative program, but thereafter, with the exception of vetoing two bills on election laws, both of which were overridden, he remained in general aloof from the legislative mechanisms. When it appeared that portions of his program would be by-passed, he did not protest with cries of anguish. John Bailey, who had engaged in a running battle with the Republicans the last time they dominated the Assembly in 1947, did not issue a single formal statement during the entire legislative session. Rather he was content to encourage the Republicans to fight among themselves, an objective which was comparatively easily achieved inasmuch as the Baldwin-Alcorn group controlled the Senate and the Brennan-Zeller forces controlled the House. The Democrats' association with the "old guard" was effective and obvious. During the House debate on the school bus issue, leaders of the Democratic party were seen in cooperation with some of the Republican leaders directing the strategy of the floor fight from the Speaker's room which joins the House and for years was regarded as "off limits" for Democrats.¹¹

The School Bus Bill

In a drama packed session, the House, after five and one-half hours of debate, gave final approval to one of the most controversial measures in Connecticut's legislative history, the school bus bill. Intense concern

developed over this bill in the last month of the session and its course contrasted to the momentous regularity with which the House and Senate endorsed the decisions of the Republican caucus. At issue was whether towns were to be permitted to provide bus transportation for pupils in private non-profit schools. The controversy was begun when Senator Benjamin J. Kopacz introduced a bill which would have permitted any town to provide to such private schools bus transportation and those health and safety services normally provided in public schools. The Education Committee, which was dominated by E. O. Smith, recommended rejection of the bill. Then the full scale battle was begun. The Senate made the bill the Order of the Day for Monday, May 13. The Lieutenant-Governor vacated his chair as President of the Senate and spoke against the bill. To quiet the fears of those who argued that the bill, as originally drawn, granted too great a degree of latitude, the services, which could be provided were specified to include medical, dental, nursing, and bus services only. In a subsequent amendment, in an effort to make the bill more palatable, all services except transportation were deleted. When the measure reached the House, it overrode the ruling of the Speaker that it be placed on the calendar and shunted it back to committee where it was hoped it would die. In the *Catholic Transcript*, the Archdiocese of Hartford condemned the House members who had attempted to kill the bill and threatened reprisals against them at the polls. Within two days after the vote to recommit, sufficient signatures had been gained on a petition to force the bill out of committee. On the following Sunday, a letter signed by Archbishop Henry J. O'Brien asking that parishioners watch carefully the results of the House vote was read in the Catholic Churches of the State. The bill was made the Order of the Day in the House for Wednesday, May 29. The unofficial count swerved back and forth as cloak room ballots were taken. As representatives prepared for the showdown *they* exerted all the pressures at their command. This was not just another legislative measure. Supporters of the bill argued that the bill simply extended those rights of welfare guaranteed by the constitution; that a large segment of the population was being denied its fair share of the taxes it was paying; that, in a period of critical shortage of educational facilities, the private schools were keeping down taxes. When the House

convened, there were preliminary skirmishes over a resolution which would have denied the state or any subdivision thereof the right to use its funds to transport students to private schools, but would have made this the specific responsibility of the legislature. After a recess when the House reconvened on order, the galleries were packed. A motion to accept the committee's unfavorable report and reject the bill was lost, 153 to 106. The legislators turned to the consideration of the amendments proposed by the senate. When the Speaker upheld a point of order raised by the minority leader that the comments being presented by E. O. Smith were not germane, the Speaker was overruled 153 to 106. The vote on the amendments was 152 to 106. The battle was not over. An amendment was offered and withdrawn. Another was offered, and the Majority Leader called for a recess after which the second amendment was withdrawn. There was further jockeying for legislative position with the proponents stalling for time while they mustered their forces for the final vote. After one hundred speeches lasting five and one-half hours during which the rulings of the chair were challenged four times, the fourth and final roll call was made. All eyes were riveted on the electrical voting machine as the red and green lights registered the yeas and nays. The vote was 133 to 133. The Clerk of the House announced the tie. Nelson Brown, the Speaker of the House, with predetermined haste announced in resonant tones: “The Speaker of the House votes yes, the bill is passed.” The bill provided that upon a petition of five per cent of the electors of a municipality the question of the provision of transportation services by the town would be submitted to the electors in a referendum. If a majority voted in the affirmative, the municipality was to provide for its children attending private schools not conducted for a profit the same transportation service it provided for the children attending public schools.¹²

Conflicts In Mental Health Administration

The overlapping authority of the Mental Health Council and the Trustees of the three state hospitals resulted in administrative difficulties which in 1957 were translated into conflict between the Commissioner of Mental Health and the Superintendent of Fairfield Hospital. Inas-

much as nine of the twelve members of the Council, as it was originally constituted, were chosen from the Trustees of the institutions, the Council was not independent of institutional influence. Although the Commissioner had been given general supervision of the hospitals, the Trustees retained their appointive powers. The difficulties of bringing the hospitals, which had enjoyed relative independence, under the supervision of the Commissioner was complicated by the overcrowded conditions, the personality conflicts which accompany such transitions, and the new techniques of treatment introduced under the aegis of the Department of Mental Health. Dr. John Blasko, the Commissioner, in an obvious test of his authority, requested on May 29, 1957, the immediate dismissal of Dr. W. G. Green, Superintendent of the Fairfield Hospital, charging him with gross negligence, including abusive treatment of employees and attempts to block the use of needed psychological and occupational therapy techniques. The Trustees, who seemed to feel that Blasko had circumvented their authority in submitting his charges to the Council, immediately expressed a confidence in the Superintendent, conditional on the possibility that additional evidence might be submitted. Blasko, who had come to believe that he had been hired to do a job, but had not the authority to do it, resigned immediately stating that the actions of the Trustees made it impossible for him to perform his duties. A three man investigating committee, headed by former Supreme Court Justice William M. Maltbie, did not sustain Blasko in his charges related to the general administration of the hospital, but recognized that the dispute could only be resolved by an examination of the hospital's professional policies. The Governor, acting upon this recommendation, requested the American Psychiatric Association to make the study. Meanwhile, Green and Blasko exchanged verbal blows, and the General Assembly enacted legislation to correct the situation. The Council was changed to a Board of seven members who were to be appointed by the Governor and the Commissioner was given clear administrative authority over the hospitals.¹³

The State Prison

Steps were taken toward prison reform and the resolution of some

of the long standing problems of the state prison. The population of the prison had increased about 15 per cent since 1950, and the problems occasioned by the over-crowding had been indicated by the wardens each succeeding year. The situation at the prison was highlighted in the Summer of 1956 by serious disturbances among the inmates which resulted in the resignation of the Warden, in a grand jury investigation, and in a study of prison reform by an especially appointed commission headed by Justice P. B. O'Sullivan. The Grand Jury, the Commission, and the new Warden, Mark S. Richmond, made a number of suggestions, many of which were translated into realities by the 1957 Assembly. Efforts were made to resolve some of the complaints of the inmates by the appointment of an independent Parole Board of three members. This Board was charged with the responsibility for parole previously exercised by the Directors of the prison. In answer to other complaints, a Sentence Review Board, consisting of three Superior Court Judges, was established to review the sentence of any person sentenced to term of one year or more who filed an application for such a review. Prompt disposition of cases pending against an inmate was assured by the provision that inmates would be assured of trial within 120 days after the prisoner's request for final disposition of the charges. The part that rehabilitation was to play in the prison program was suggested in a new emphasis on prison industries for which an advisory citizens committee was created. During the biennium 1959-60, the number of inmates employed rose from 317 to 433; the gross sales, from \$564,198 to \$677,000; and the net profits, from \$18,205 to \$46,320. In addition, education and training for the inmates was extended to a significant degree.¹⁴

Preliminary steps were made toward the establishment of a separate institution for the custody and treatment of sexual deviates. The care of the sexual deviates had been an issue in the Connecticut General Assembly since 1947 when it was proposed that they be made the responsibility of the mental hospitals. The hospitals were not enthusiastic about accepting this responsibility and pleaded that they were not equipped to handle such problems. The Legislative Council, therefore, in 1948 recommended that sex offenders remain the province of the criminal courts. Despite repeated efforts nothing was done while the

debate continued over whether sexual deviates should be the responsibility of the mental hospitals or of the penal institutions. Largely through efforts of Representative Gertrude Koskoff, a bond issue of \$250,000 was authorized in 1957 to start plans for a separate institution for sexual deviates.¹⁵

Of equal importance in the ultimate improvement of the State Prison was the authorization of a bond issue for the beginning of what was ultimately to be a new prison on the location of the Osborn Prison Farm at Enfield. The first unit designed for 400 men was identified by Warden Richmond as a minimum security prison. The February, 1958, session of the General Assembly allotted \$250,000 for designing the rest of the prison and funds were subsequently granted for the completion of the maximum phase of the prison which was scheduled for completion in 1963. Serious overcrowding continued, however. As of June 30, 1958, the population at Wethersfield reached an all time high of 974; and by 1960, it was over 1,000. The transfer of some inmates to Enfield relieved the crowding at Wethersfield temporarily, but by 1962 it was again approaching 800.

Under Warden Richmond there were changes including an extension of the education and training of the inmates. These were significant if judged, as by Warden Richmond in his reports, by profits. It is noted that while the number employed increased 36 per cent and the gross sales 18 per cent, the profits increased 150 per cent. Although changes did not seem to result in a more pacific prison population, other improvements were reported, such as in the prison hospital and in the guard force, they were not sufficient to avert riots. When the inmates undertook in November, 1957, what was called a "passive" demonstration against prison policies and procedures, the Warden pointed inferentially at the previous administration. The action, he stated, was designed by a small group of inmates who had been trying to seize control of the prison for the past two years. The riot of January and February, 1960, was of much greater magnitude, and the services of the State Police, the Wethersfield Fire Department, and other agencies were required to being the inmates under control. If anyone attempted to determine, eliminate or mitigate the causes for such disturbances, it was not evident in the Warden's report. He wrote that the riot provided an opportunity

"to summarily complete the process of 'tightening up' and the improvement of the regulatory procedures which had been begun under serious handicaps three years earlier." A second riot within the year occurred in October, 1960, at which time additional privileges were taken away from the prisoners.¹⁶

The inability to evolve policies satisfactory to the staff of the prison also hindered efficient operations throughout the decade. The refusal of the state to bargain with employee groups or with their representatives was boldly written by Warden George S. Cummings before his resignation in 1956. He protested that the prison could never be effectively operated as long as there was organized interference. There is no contract with the state, he held, and therefore there can be no bargaining. Contract or not, the morale of the staff, especially that of the guards, was of importance to the smooth operation of the prison and to the people of the state. The warden recommended no changes, reporting that "salary complaints have kept the staff in constant turmoil, and so affected their attitude and thinking as to interfere with the prison operations." When Cummings resigned, Richmond made some progress toward improving the morale of the guard force, but became involved in a controversy over the pay of the guards and over who was to bargain for them. The attention of the public was again attracted to the prison with the escape of convicts in 1961. Members of the Prison Board had concluded apparently that the circumstances required an ability not possessed by Warden Richmond.¹⁷

Richmond resigned on December 18, 1961, and the administration of the prison passed temporarily to the Adjutant General, Frederick G. Reincke. It had been reported early in December that Warden Richmond was going to resign, but was willing to stay on until a successor could be found. Some members of the Prison Board immediately expressed their confidence in the Warden, but it was reported that the Governor was interested in making some basic changes in the prison administration. The board was called to meet at the State Capitol, and the Warden's resignation was accepted without delay. The arrangement made, whereby Richmond was to continue as consultant on the work on the new prison at Enfield, however, drew the criticism of Republican gubernatorial aspirant, Edwin H. May, who also charged the Governor

with covering up a bad situation at the prison and asked for a general investigation, which the Governor did not indicate a disposition to grant. Upon assuming the responsibilities which he had held under similar circumstances when Warden Cummings resigned in 1956, Reincke announced that he would not treat directly with a committee of the prisoners, who he assumed wished to request the restoration of the privileges lost in 1960. The view prevailed that the difficulties at the prison would be considerably diminished by the completion of the prison at Enfield. Even though this in probability will mitigate the difficulties, it seems improbable that the problem is no more basic, nor complex than can be resolved by improved physical facilities.¹⁸

Politics and Taxes

Although the Republican dominated Assembly endorsed programs which furthered what were generally regarded as Republican tenets, there were many uncertainties as to the value of some of the legislation to the party politically. The extension of the privileges of home rule, increased state aid to towns for school expenses, greater access of the public and the press to public records and meetings, the establishment of a bond retirement fund and of a ceiling on the state debt was legislation readily identified with the Republican party. On the other hand, the reduction of the state taxes on insurance companies' interest and dividends, which was passed over the Governor's veto, was an action out of which the Democrats believed they might gain political advantage. The Republicans refused to eliminate the Justice Court system in the small towns where the Republicans were strong and refused also to alter the other minor courts which were controlled by the Democrats. This was evidently predicated on the expectation that they would control the Assembly and, consequently, the patronage more frequently than their opponents. The state employees were among the greatest beneficiaries of the legislative session. Their retirement fund was stabilized, more vacation time was granted, broader pension and death benefits were gained, the right to join the federal social security plan was authorized, and an increase in pay was granted. Of greater importance, perhaps, was the fact that the rules and regulations covering their work was

removed from the responsibility of the Personnel Department and, in accordance with the Governor's request, the State Personnel Appeals Board was expanded to seven members and given power to arbitrate grievances.

Except for the school bus bill, the issue which elicited the greatest interest developed during consideration of the extension of the six cents gasoline tax on July 1, 1959. John C. Donaldson, the House Chairman of the Finance Committee, charged the Highway Department with waste and inefficiency. In a carefully prepared address, he appeared to document the charges, and, in the process of seeking to embarrass the Democratic Administration, demanded an investigation of the Highway Department and the removal of the State Highway Commissioner. Donaldson, who spoke infrequently on the floor of the House, almost single handedly convinced the members of the House of the merits of his charges. On the roll call vote the continuance of the tax was apparently approved 99 to 96, but the count was challenged and a new vote demanded. At the moment when it seemed that the opposition might have sufficient strength to kill the bill, Donaldson announced he would go along with the increase since the tax was necessary for continuing the services of the state.

In the balance sheet of accomplishments, which he presented on the night of adjournment, the Governor listed the achievements, but charged the Republican Assembly with the failure to reorganize the court system, to reform county government, to establish a department of mental retardation, and to extend civil rights. It remained for the *Courant* to point unintentionally, perhaps, to the true status of Connecticut politics with the observation that the legislation enacted was a Republican program, but it did “not differ very much from the program offered . . . by Ribicoff.”¹⁹

The 1957-58 Recession

The recession which was then becoming everywhere evident was reflected in Connecticut's business conditions by the latter part of 1957. Cutbacks in U.S. government spending contributed to the slackening in business activity. Hardest hit were the machine tools, brass, appliances,

office machinery, and especially the transportation equipment industries. The most significant barometer was the rise of unemployment, which increased from 28,800 in June, 1957, to 88,900 in January, 1958. The condition was aggravated by the continual increase in the consumer price index. After conferring with the legislative leaders, Governor Ribicoff called a special session of the General Assembly which convened in March, 1958. Although the Assembly enacted legislation which identified Connecticut as the first state to permit the unemployed to collect benefits for the duration of the emergency, the program for recovery enacted by the Republican controlled legislature was evaluated by Ribicoff as "Not an effective answer to the needs of the state's general economy. . . ." In addition to the unemployment benefits, 30 millions were authorized to speed the state's highway program, 15 millions for urban renewal and industrial development, seven and one-half millions for public works, and \$550,000 for the farmer's drought fund. Though it is certain that the unemployment benefits eased the hardships of the jobless, it is difficult to measure to what extent the legislation contributed to the recovery. Unemployment continued to increase until it reached 107,300 in June, 1958, and the sales tax collections for the first nine months of 1958 were ten per cent less than they had been the previous year. The Connecticut economy in general followed the improvement in business conditions throughout the country. The unemployment had decreased to 73,000 by the beginning of 1959, and it was becoming apparent that the recovery was general.²⁰

1958 Election

Those who were observing Connecticut's political scene closely in 1958 realized that history was probably in the making when the decisions of the respective nominating conventions became official. Although "New Republicanism" had been checked with the defeat of Lodge in 1954, the identification of the Baldwin-Alcorn forces with a popular national administration permitted their faction of the Party to exert a dominant influence in Party affairs in the state. Yet, the Brennan-Zeller forces had gained strength. Only the last minute return of Alcorn during the 1955 session of the Assembly had prevented the "old guards" from

dictating Republican legislative decisions at that time, and in 1957 the Brennan-Zeller group dominated the House while the Baldwin-Alcorn forces controlled the Senate. There are times in the history of political parties when the control of the party is considered more important than the winning of the contest. It may be conjectured if 1958 were not such a time for the Republican party. The nomination of Ribicoff by the Democrats was a foregone conclusion; it was apparent that his popularity had increased during his term of office; and it was recognized that he would be extremely difficult to defeat. In this situation the Baldwin-Alcorn forces did not come up with a candidate of their choice. Fred Zeller, the State Comptroller, who had been high in Republican circles for over 20 years, announced his candidacy for the nomination although some of his friends advised for and others against this action. Somewhat belatedly John D. Alsop, a member of one of the nation's better known families and a descendant of one of Connecticut's most historic ones, began whipping up grass roots support for his candidacy. He succeeded almost too well. At the convention the contest narrowed so that the delegates supporting J. Kenneth Bradley of Westport, a third contestant, became the determinant in the final decision. At the crucial moment, William Brennan, with the finesse of the seasoned politician, turned sufficient votes from Bradley to gain the nomination for Zeller. As the election was to prove, insofar as the control of the Republican party was concerned, he was the loser; Alsop, the winner.

The campaign had hardly begun when it became apparent that the only question was the size of Ribicoff's plurality. Significantly, a number of newspapers in the state, which hitherto had been loyal to the Republican cause, announced their support of the Governor. Zeller was clearly overmatched, but his campaign was also under-financed. Members of his party sat on their hands and on their pocketbooks. The fate of the entire Democratic ticket was tied to the personal image of Abraham Ribicoff, and the results on election day exceeded the expectations of his most optimistic supporters. His record breaking 245,000 plurality carried the entire state ticket into office and gave the Democrats control of the House for the first time since 1876. The 29 to seven margin in the state Senate was an impressive display of political strength; and the sweep was completed by the election of all the Democratic candidates for

seats in the United States Congress, including the victory of the Senatorial candidate, Tom Dodd, over William Purtell. The Governor's program of moderation obviously had appealed to voters of all political faiths. While there was no mistaking his popularity, the effects of the schism which had torn at the roots of the Republican party for eight years was also reflected in the margin of victory.²¹

Organization of Republican Party

After the debacle of the election, the Republican Party was reorganized. A dinner meeting of eight or nine Republicans at the home of John Alsop on the next evening after the election was followed by a series of strategy conferences by the May forces. The view prevailed that there must be a change in party leadership. Clarence Baldwin, after consultation with Senator Prescott Bush, agreed to step aside when the party decided on a candidate, presumably with the understanding that Baldwin would move into one of the state auditor's positions which was then vacant. As the members of the GOP jockeyed for their political lives, Edwin H. May, the defeated Republican candidate in the First Congressional District, came to the fore as representing the most neutral position among the warring factions. His election seemed assured when Zeller issued press releases which sounded like an endorsement. As the dissident elements sought to gain control of the party, Zeller, who apparently had spoken without checking with his party faithfuls sought to withdraw his support from May. There followed a series of contradictory statements which at best portrayed the former gubernatorial candidate as a man of indecision, and at worst as ambivalent. Horace Seeley-Brown of Pomfret, who had lost his seat in Congress in the Democratic landslide to Chester Bowles, was available, as was Senator Peter Mariani of Groton. Meanwhile, three county organizations had indicated a change of leadership, including Fairfield, a Brennan stronghold. When Albert Morano, the new leader of Fairfield county, announced on December 1 that he would support May, the back of the opposition was broken. May was named as State Chairman on December 9. Whether his success was a prelude to greater political achievements or the beginning of a road to personal political oblivion is at the time of writing

still to be decided. As Chairman he succeeded to a position as party spokesman, a position which potentially would enable him to extend his political image. Meanwhile Alsop had sufficient strength among the legislators to name the Republican leaders of the 1959 session of the Assembly. This constituted a position of strength which if properly exploited could project Alsop into an advantageous position in his bid for the gubernatorial nomination for 1962.²³

Proposals for Change

The broad outlines of the program which the Governor would recommend to the General Assembly were announced before it convened. Ribicoff interpreted his victory "as an opportunity to accomplish things which the people have been working to achieve for years." In this category fell the proposal to reorganize the local court system on a regional basis with full time judges and the proposal for the convention to revise the constitution. Legislation was anticipated to eliminate county government, and the Governor announced a "top to bottom reorganization of the state's bureaucracy." A vast highway building program to be financed by a bond issue was proposed by the committee headed by Frazier Wilde of the Connecticut General Insurance Company and was supported by the Governor. He had promised during the campaign that there would be no increase in taxes, and shortly after the election he assured the citizens of Connecticut that as long as he was Governor there would not be an income tax. He was confident that the Democratic program could be accomplished without upsetting the budget. How this was to be done, it was reported, would have to be a major policy decision of the Governor.²³

NOTES — CHAPTER XXXVII

1. *Journal of the House*, 1955, pp. 31-32; *Hartford Courant*, June 3, 9, 1955.
2. *Reports of the Legislative Council*, 1948, p. 36, 1954, pp. 129-31; *Journal of the House*, 1955, pp. 36, 460; *Hartford Courant*, June 3, 8, 1955.
3. *Hartford Courant*, June 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 1955.

4. *Ibid.*, May 29, 1953, June 2, 5, 6, 10, 1955.
5. 1955 *Supplement to Connecticut General Statutes*, pp. 95-101, 1332; *Report of the Legislative Council*, 1950, 4-43; *Hartford Courant*, June 7, 1951, May 1, 1953, June 1, 1955.
6. *Ibid.*, June 4, 1955.
7. *General Statutes*, 1949 revision, p. 704; *Public Acts*, 1951, p. 336, 1953, p. 500; *Hartford Courant*, June 1, 5, 9, 1955.
8. 1955 *Supplement*, *General Statutes*, pp. 211-27; *Public Acts*, 1957, pp. 757-86; *Report of the Legislative Council*, 1954, 27-58; Lockard, *New England State Politics*, pp. 284-85; *Hartford Courant*, June 2, 12, 1955.
9. *Journal of the House*, 1957, pp. 1-17; Lockard, *New England State Politics*, pp. 276-77; *Hartford Courant*, June 10, 12, 14, 1955.
10. *Connecticut Flood Recovery Committee, Report to Governor Ribicoff* (Hartford, 1955) pp. 1-431; *Hartford Courant*, Aug. 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, Oct. 16, 17, 18, 1955.
11. The popular vote in Connecticut in 1957 was: Eisenhower, 711, 837; Stevensen, 405, 079.
12. *Register and Manual*, State of Connecticut, 1957, pp. 116, 128, 472; *Journal of the House*, 1957, pp. 35-44; *Hartford Courant*, June 9, 1957.
13. *Journal of the House*, 1957, pp. 1394-98, 1430-31, 1533-57; *Journal of the Senate*, 1957, pp. 1083, 1112, 1123, 1128, 1220, 1238, 1355; *Public Acts*, 1957, p. 814; *Hartford Courant*, June 2, 4, 6, 9, 1957.
14. *Public Acts*, 1953, pp. 654-56, 1957, pp. 1047-50; "Reports of the Department of Mental Health," 1955-60, *Digests of Administrative Reports*, 1955-60; *Hartford Courant*, June 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 1957.
15. "Reports of the Connecticut State Prison," 1950-60, *Digest of Administrative Reports*, 1950-60; *Public Acts*, 1957, pp. 571-72, 658-60, 818, 1055-58; *Hartford Courant*, June 9, 1957.
16. *Reports of the Legislative Council*, 1948-54; *Hartford Courant*, June 9, 1957.
17. "Reports of the Connecticut State Prison," 1957-58, 1959-60, *Digests of Administrative Reports*, 1957-60; *Hartford Courant*, Dec. 31, 1961.
18. "Report of the Connecticut State Prison," 1956, *Digest of Administrative Reports*, 1956, 136-37.
19. *Hartford Courant*, Dec. 24, 28, 29, 31, 1961, Jan. 3, 7, 1962.
20. *Ibid.*, June 2, 5, 6, 9, 1957.
21. *Connecticut Industry*, Mar., 1958, pp. 49-50, Sept., 1958, p. 53, Nov., 1958, p. 65, Feb., 1959, p. 41; "Report of the Labor Department," 1957-58, *Digest of Administrative Reports*, 1957-58, pp. 81-9; *Hartford Courant*, Mar. 4, Apr. 16, 19, 1958.
22. *Ibid.*, Nov 1, 2, 5, 1958.
23. *Ibid.*, Nov. 6, 8, 9, 14, Dec. 7, 1958.
24. *Ibid.*, Nov. 6, 12, 13, 30, Dec. 9, 1958.

Chapter XXXVIII

A Measure of Reform

THE DRAMA of an historical event was everywhere evident as members of the Assembly gathered in Hartford on Wednesday, January 9, 1959. Most humiliating to the Republicans, of course, was the loss of the lower chamber. For the first time since 1876 the Democrats were to organize the House. To steer the party's program they chose the veteran legislator, Samuel Google, who was gifted alike in the arts of political buffoonery and lyrical expression, in open debate and in the closed council of the caucus. For Speaker, the House chose the popular Portland Democrat, William J. O'Brien, who was untutored in the intricacies of parliamentary procedure, but unchallenged in his reputation for fairplay. Most symbolic of the change, perhaps, was the Democrats occupancy of the Speaker's room, which after three generations of tenancy the Republicans had come to regard as their very own. Outside the Speaker's room, Democratic leaders took up their stations around the rotunda where Republicans previously had stood. Inside the room, portraits of the favorite Republican speakers lined the wall as reminders to the Democrats that they held only a short term lease. The change, however, was far more than symbolic. Both parties were unaccustomed to the new alignment in the House and to their new responsibilities. The Republicans, in their years of domination, had forgotten how to be effective as a minority party. The Democrats lacked experience in the practice of the arts and skills which a majority party can exercise. There was more than the usual number of new legislators, and in the House, where party strength was almost equally divided, it was imperative that newcomers learn the lessons of party discipline if administration measures were to succeed. Of more tangible importance,

was the fact that as a result of the tremendous Republican majority in 1957 there were simply not enough experienced Democrats in 1959 to assume leadership on the important committees. It required an unusual political craftsmanship to mold the inexperienced Democratic majority, flush with victory and anxious to promote legislation which would facilitate reelection, into an effective legislative force.

Plan for Action

The plan for achieving favorable legislative action on the administration's program was artfully conceived and executed. The technical deficiencies which were inevitable in such comprehensive concept of fundamental changes in the structure of government were ironed out by trusted lieutenants, as Ella Grasso the Secretary of State, George Conkling the Commissioner of Finance, and her deputy Philips, and areas of compromise were sought among the many factions which arose in opposition or in support of the recommendations. The hearings were scheduled in such a manner as to give the greatest possible impetus to the Governor's program. Once the details were drawn, the task of translating the preciously thin Democratic majority in the House into favorable action was assumed by the artful craftsman, John Bailey. His encyclopedic knowledge of legislative history, however, was not enough. Individual legislators were kept in line by postponing their pet projects until the last days of the session, and the party leadership finally agreed to pay raises for the members of the Assembly after first appearing to oppose it. Telegrams were used freely, and police escorts too, it was rumored, were employed when necessary to have the party faithful on hand for the crucial votes. Finally party "gendarmes" patrolled the corridors to see that every Democrat was in his seat for the roll calls. Practical politician that he is, Bailey knew better than anyone a skillful use of patronage at the moments of decision could deliver the margin for victories. A host of new appointive positions, including 44 new judgeships would be created if the minor courts were reorganized. That proposal was considered early in the session.

Reorganization of the Courts

The reorganization of the minor courts was perhaps "one of the

most sweeping judicial reforms in the state's history." The Democrats proposed bringing all the municipal courts and trial justice courts into a single integrated court system consisting of 44 full time judges. The Republicans favored a less sweeping reorganization which would include only the municipal courts. Inasmuch as the Democrats held unchallengeable control of the Senate, the most the GOP could hope for was a compromise on the plan. The success of such a hope was dependent upon defections of the Democrats in the House from the party's position, while the Republicans went "down the line." A superficial evaluation of the situation, particularly early in the legislative session, provided some basis for such hope. The trial justice courts had been historically important patronage plums, particularly in the small towns. Many of these small towns had elected Democrats to the House for the first time in years. Obviously with Democrats in control it was to the interest of these Democratic representatives to continue the trial justices. If these small town Democrats voted their interest, as small town Republicans were inclined to do, the Republicans might be able to alter the plan for complete reorgnaization.¹

As events were to prove, however, there were errors in this reasoning. Although the Governor had said that he would appoint the same number of Republicans as Democrats, he was not bound to those suggested by the Republican leadership. There were then 22 appointments which could be used to gain Republican support. Indeed, it was charged on one occasion, that the Governor would not appoint as a Judge anyone from a district whose representative voted against the reorganization bill. It would be inaccurate to suggest that politics was the only criterion used in the ultimate selection of the Judges, but it would be naive to assume that political considerations were of no importance. Any plan to defeat or alter the Democratic proposal had to consider the fact that in the past Bailey and Brennan had worked closely on major policy decisions oftentimes to the embarrassment of the official GOP position and the possibility that they would cooperate again. Also, the Fairfield County leader still had faithful followers, such as Rodney Eileson of Trumbull, the defeated candidate for Comptroller, who could benefit from a court position. Edwin H. May, in the first months of his tenure as Chairman, might have interpreted Brennan's resignation as Fairfield

County leader and his absence from the Capital during the first two months of the legislative session as indicating that he had in truth retired from politics. When the court issue was at its highest, however, the veteran politician made his appearance at the capital. He went into conference with "Cappy" Baldwin, had lunch with a few friends, huddled with a few more, and then announced that he supported the Governor's court plan. There were cries of "deal," accusations that Bailey, Ribicoff, and Brennan were "under the same blanket." An electrically charged Republican caucus reaffirmed its faith in the party leadership, but when the appointments were made the Brennan influence was clearly evident. More surprising, perhaps, is the fact that the legislative leaders did not follow the counsel of such Republican leaders as William H. Mortensen of the Executive of the Connecticut Citizens for Better Courts who was in opposition to the party's position and actually mobilized support for the Governor's plan. In contrast to the tendency of Republican members of the House to act independently was the party discipline which Bailey was able to exact from the Democratic members. Within the Democratic Party, the issue was defined as one of party leadership. The word went out that court reorganization was a "must" bill. The language came to be understood even by those who were novices in party politics.²

Technical errors in the drafting of the bill provided the Republican leadership with an opportunity to extricate themselves somewhat, from the unhappy position in which they found themselves. The provision of the proposed bill which gave the Chief Justice the authority to assign a Circuit Court Judge to the Superior Court Bench was contrary to the provision that a Superior Court Judge could be appointed only by the Governor with the confirmation of the Assembly. The Superior Court, it was pointed out, was a constitutional court and the method of appointment of its Judges could not be altered by statutory provision. Further, it was provided in the proposed bill that cases transferred or appealed from the Circuit Court to the higher court could be tried by a six man jury whereas twelve man juries also tried cases in the Superior Court. These changes were made by those drafting the administration bill, but Republican leaders immediately charged that the Court reform bill proposed by the Democrats had faults. They held that the bill as drawn

did not give the Circuit Courts the power to hold Jury trials of any kind and therefore made them incapable of rendering final judgment in any critical case. Under such circumstances, they argued the proposed Circuit Court was little more than a carbon copy of the municipal courts. In this substantive criticism there was actually provided a basis for compromise. On the day the bill was to go to the Senate for a vote John Alsop, who had met with Mortensen a week earlier, judged somewhat belatedly it would seem, that it was politically prudent to support the Governor's proposal. The same day Ernest S. McCormack, Chairman of the State Bar Association, appeared at the Democratic caucus room with a proposal that jury trials should be held in Circuit Courts. Just as the Senate was prepared to discuss the bill, Bailey, May and others met and worked out a compromise providing that jury trials would be held in the Circuit Courts and that one-third of the fines collected in Circuit Courts for motor vehicle violations would be returned to the towns. The latter provision, it was hoped, would make the proposal more palatable to the small towns. There was some bitter criticism of the Republican leadership for having agreed to this compromise, but the party caucus supported it by a 57 to 35 vote. The bill was rushed through the Senate on Tuesday of the next week and was transmitted immediately to the House for action. There small town Republicans made one last determined effort to delay the passage of the bill, seeking unsuccessfully to block the suspension of the rules which was necessary for the bill to be considered immediately. They failed by four votes. After five hours and forty minutes of "tense and often bitter debate," the bill was passed.³

As soon as court reform had been legislated claimants pressed for appointment, individually, in groups, and through friends and political allies. One wife of an applicant appealed directly to the Governor. There were more than 300 applicants for the 44 judgeships. "It was not a pretty sight," wrote one reporter, to see judges and prosecutors lined up to see the party leaders. It was stated that at least four of the appointees did not get top rating by the Connecticut Bar Association and of the 22 Republicans named it was estimated that not more than 14 had been named by the chairman of the Republican Party. There were suggestions, too, on the basis of the first months of operation, that the Circuit Courts were cumbersome and that they removed to a great extent the human

factor in the adjudication of misdemeanors. In general, however, the view prevailed that the establishment of the Circuit Courts furthered the principle of government by law.⁴

An effort to effect a further improvement in the court system failed in the next session of the legislature. The docket of the Superior Court had become jammed, and it was reported in January, 1961, that some cases were delayed from 24 to 35 months. The Republicans took the position that the situation could be improved by merging the Common Pleas Courts and the Superior Courts and introduced legislation to that end. This was not a new idea. It had been advocated since 1950 by practically every committee which had studied the court system and had been supported by the Connecticut Bar Association. Ernest S. McCormack testified that there was no longer any justification for continuing the Common Pleas Courts. Chief Justice Raymond Baldwin meanwhile had made known his opposition to the merger and favored instead an increase in the number of Superior Court Judges from 22 to 29. The Republican members of the Judiciary Committee, consisting of 10 or 12 young lawyers, favored Baldwin's proposal. Bailey appeared willing for the Democrats to support the plan jointly with the Republicans, and Edwin H. May seemed initially to agree. Other Republican leaders, with an eye to the 1962 campaign, reasoned that the Democrats would be the chief beneficiaries and recommended waiting until 1963 when a Republican might sit in the Governor's chair. They and the Republican members of the Judiciary Committee met in a vain effort to resolve their differences. The Democrats refused to assume sole responsibility for the bill, and any alteration of the Superior Courts was delayed.⁵

The Abolition of County Government

Second only to court reorganization in the reform legislation of the 1959 General Assembly was the abolition of County Government. The historical predominance of the town in Connecticut had resulted in limiting the function of county government to little more than the administration of the county jails. The power to appoint the three commissioners and the subordinate attendants in each county, however, continued to be a valuable political plum to be dispensed by the party

which controlled the General Assembly. As a result of their perennial control of the House this had been of greatest advantage to the Republicans and the favorite target of the Democrats. Now, however, the situation was altered. The Democrats controlled both houses of the legislature for the first time in three generations, and, inasmuch as two of the three commissioners in each county were up for appointment, the Democrats could control the County Governments. As the bill languished in committee, it appeared as if the Democrats were going to succumb to the temptation and continue the county system. Yet, there remained the possibility that greater political advantage could be gained by eliminating the county as a unit of government, particularly if the personnel were transferred to the state payroll. Despite the fact that many of the small towns stood to gain materially from the relief from taxes collected to support the county organization, the Republicans were generally in opposition to the bill.

In the belief that the measure was dead, it is reported, the Chairman of the Republican Party publicly twitted his Democratic counterpart for not pushing the county reform measure aggressively. The incident occurred at a meeting of the Laurel Club, where at an annual festive meeting members of the press and politicians conventionally exchange political barbs. The challenge was accepted by Mr. Bailey, and the bill was promptly pushed through the Senate where the Democrats exercised complete control. The real test came in the House where the Republicans failed by seven votes in their effort to kill the bill under the guise of creating a commission to study the subject. Then, in what was an obvious effort to strip the bill of its patronage value, they likewise failed by a narrow margin of two votes to reduce to \$500.00 the salaries of County Sheriffs, who were to be absorbed in the state government. When the Governor signed the bill on May 12, 1959, an institution which dated from 1666 was to come to an end. "A milestone in Connecticut's history" wrote the *Courant*, "for which the people can be grateful."⁶

Reorganization of State Government

The elimination of county government and the alteration of the courts were significant reforms, but the governing agencies reorganized

constituted something less than the "top to bottom" reorganization which the Governor had promised. He altered, or called off altogether, those plans for reorganization where the clamor in opposition was the loudest. When the details of the plans became known, there began a terrific behind-the-scenes struggle on the part of members of citizens' boards and commissions who sought to retain their prerogatives, on the part of agency heads who sought to retain their positions, and on the part of others who believed sincerely that the functions of the agencies concerned would be severely hampered by the proposed alterations of structure or responsibilities. In the face of strong opposition, principally by Miss Ethel Mecum, the Superintendent of Long Lane School, who held steadfastly to the view that Long Lane was not a penal institution, the proposed Department of Corrections was referred to the Legislative Council for study.⁷ Although the idea was presented again to the 1961 General Assembly, the legislators failed to act favorably on the proposal. Extensive lobbying efforts on the part of the pharmacists of the state prevented the Pharmacy Commission from being absorbed by the proposed Department of Consumer Protection for other than house keeping purposes. The Board of Education objection to the divided authority that was implicit in the provision that the State Library and the Education of the Blind be responsible to the Commissioner of Education while continuing their established boards resulted in the continued independence of the two agencies.

Nevertheless, certain significant changes were accomplished in the structure and administrative responsibilities of government. Those responsible for directing the legislative program wisely capitalized on the desire of parents and friends to have an office of Mental Retardation established by choosing the proposal to reorganize the Department of Health, of which the proposed office was to be a part, as the first of the reorganization plans to be submitted to the legislature. The support of the reorganization of this Department to include a program relating to mental retardation had developed gradually and represented acceptance of a compromise as to the status of the state unit which would be established and charged with responsibility for the state program for the mentally retarded. To the 1957 session of the General Assembly, Ribicoff had proposed the establishment of a Department of Mental

Retardation. The issue had become involved in differences between the various groups of parents and friends of the retarded and the Republican dominated Welfare Committee had followed the predisposition of its chairman to kill the bill. The committee contended that there was not sufficient evidence upon which to commit the state to the expenditures which would be entailed. The idea that the state should assume some greater degree of responsibility in the care of the retarded, however, was implicit in an appropriation of \$7,500, secured through the efforts of J. Fred Pope, the House Majority Leader, for a study of the "adequacies of facilities and supervision available to the mentally retarded residents of the state."⁸ The Legislative Council and the Welfare Committee, under whose aegis the study was conducted, had then recommended the establishment of a Division of Mental Retardation in the Department of Mental Health. The view persisted, however, among the parents of the retarded, that the care and treatment of retardates had to be specialized and required the inclusion of an emphasis upon training which it was believed would not be accorded by the established Mental Health Department where the major focus and basic orientation was toward psychiatry. Parents hoped for more. They wanted attention to physiological causative factors and assistance with the development of the child. They thought no established department with a particular major focus would suffice. They wanted, therefore, a separate Department of Mental Retardation as recommended initially by Ribicoff. The sweeping Democratic victory in 1958, in view of Ribicoff's recommendation in 1957, would seem to have assured the realization of this objective, but the Governor was on record in favor of reducing the number of separate Departments in the state's government. At a meeting in late November, 1958, with representatives of the Connecticut Association for Retarded Children, the Governor pointed out the obvious inconsistency in this proposal and his earlier recommendation. He suggested, therefore, making retardation the responsibility of the Department of Education. The Association's representatives countered the Governor's proposal by recommending placing retardation in the Department of Health, if a separate Department were not possible. This did not avoid a division of responsibility in a total program for the retardate, but chose a focus upon physiological factors in retardation as more basic than secondary emotional ramifica-

tions or consequential intellectual characteristics. This was agreed to by the Governor on condition that he could make administrative changes in the Department of Health. In an emotionally packed hearing held subsequently in the Hall of the House, parents and friends of the retarded strongly supported the proposal in opposition to the members of the Welfare Committee and the "professional opinion" of the Department of Mental Health. The bill as finally passed added also, to the Department of Health, the Office of Tuberculosis Control in addition to other administrative and fiscal responsibilities.⁹ Other important organizational changes included grouping the activities of the State Food and Drug Commission, the State Athletic Commission, the office of the Commissioner of Weights and Measures, and various other inspection responsibilities in a Department of Consumer Protection. The Mystic Oral School became the responsibility of the Department of Education; and the Office of Civil Defense became a division of the Military Department. The number of independent commissions and offices was thus reduced. There remained some doubt, however, if the reorganization would result in increased coordination and efficiency. The Department of Agriculture, for example, which was renamed the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources was to assume the responsibility for coordinating the activities of the Board of Fisheries and Game, the Commission of Parks and Forests, the Water Resources Commission, the Natural History and Geological Survey, the Connecticut Marketing Authority, the Shell Fish Commission, and the Interstate Sanitary Commission, questioned whether the Department had the "statutory authority to engage in active programming, planning, and direction. . . ." Apparently the desire to clarify this in the 1961 Session of the General Assembly did not materialize. However, the Interstate Sanitary Commission was removed from the Department and word "conservation" dropped from its title so that it was thereafter to be identified as the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources. An effort to have the Board of Fisheries and Game removed also from the province of the Department failed.¹⁰

Legislation for the Mentally Retarded

One of the most dramatic social advances of the Fifties was that in the area of mental retardation. As a result of the dedicated efforts of

the parents and friends of the retarded and especially of the intellectual stimulus provided by Eric Sandahl, a parent of two retarded children and at the time the Editor of the Bridgeport *Herald*, the needs of the mentally retarded were brought to the attention of the public. Their efforts culminated in the enactment in the 1959 session of the General Assembly of multiple legislation to provide a broad and planned program in retardation, in addition to the establishment of the Office of Mental Retardation. Perhaps of greatest long range significance was the provision making it mandatory that school districts provide educational opportunities for the mentally retarded between the ages of six and twenty-one. Under the voluntary program endorsed by the State Department of Education in which special education for retardates might be provided by school districts, opportunities for the retarded had increased. Under this permissive legislation, there still remained school districts where opportunities were lacking and where school boards refused to make provisions. The Governor indicated his interest in the program if it met with the approval of the Commissioner of Education. He, perhaps with the thought that the Office of Mental Retardation was to be placed in his Department, gave verbal approval to the plan, with the proviso that it be made effective in September, 1961. He continued to support it, however, after it became apparent that the administrative responsibility for the Office would be assumed by the Department of Health. A measure of the effectiveness of the legislation is suggested by statistical records of implementation under the two contrasting provisions.

When the mandatory bill was passed in 1959 there were approximately 200 classes in the public schools for the mentally retarded which had been developed over a period of years. By 1962 there were 343 classes. In the absence of enforcement regulations, there remained school districts which continued to fail to provide the required opportunities or made only token compliance. In recognition of the fact that vocational training would be of special benefit to the mentally retarded, monies were provided for the establishment of sheltered workshops, and the on-the-job training program initiated at New Haven was described in 1961 as most rewarding. That legislation which was of most significance to the alteration of the method of care and treatment of the re-

tardates was perhaps contained in the provisions that the Office of Mental Retardation was to develop community day care programs, six hundred and thirty-five mentally retarded persons had benefited from the program by June, 1961. To assist parents in the early diagnosis of children suspected of being mentally retarded, three diagnostic centers were authorized, and in 1961 the numerical limitation on these was eliminated.

Also, in 1959, parents or those legally liable were relieved of the possibility of a life-time burden of supporting those mentally retarded who were residents of institutions. The idea that the State should assume full responsibility for the care of these unfortunates had been proposed by Ribicoff during his 1954 campaign. In 1955, the Assembly passed a "Fair Care Bill" under which the maximum amount of charges which could be billed was limited to \$18.75 per month. When the limitation expired, however, in September, 1957, the maximum which was billed increased until in 1959 it reached \$26.95. Theoretically, under the fair care principle the amount one was actually billed depended on one's ability to pay. In practice, however, when the maximum increased there was a tendency for the scale of payments at all levels to advance. The parents of the retarded residing at the Mansfield Training School and Hospital spearheaded a drive to alter the length and rate of payment. With the guidance of Secretary of State Ella Grasso, who frequently combines good programs with good politics, the bill was passed by voice vote, but not without the struggle in the caucus rooms and the corridors usually reserved for the money and patronage bills. It was provided that the "liability of legally liable relatives shall cease when the patient has reached the age of twenty-one or when support has been paid as charged for a period of sixteen years, whichever occurs later." Also the maximum as it then existed was frozen. Although thus to fix the maximum seems to contradict the central concept of Fair Care, the dichotomy between the theory and application of the law had resulted in a modicum of injustice. The tendency to secure from a family all possible funds for care without regard to losses to society from the consequent deprivations of opportunity to members of the family was too much a part of the Yankee character and too entrenched legally and by convention in the Welfare Department to allow a realistic expectation of change in attitude without the new corrective legislation.¹¹

The Politics of Finance

Bitter partisan controversy erupted over Ribicoff's proposal to divert a portion of the motor vehicle fees to finance operations usually charged to the General Fund. The issue was purely political from beginning to end. The Governor had announced during the campaign and had reiterated after the election that there would be no increase in taxes. When it became apparent that the State could not continue to provide the services to which it had obligated itself without increased general funds, the Governor proposed to balance the budget by the diversion of 22 million dollars from the income received from motor vehicle fees which were ascribed to the Highway Fund. There was merit in the charge that the plan was conceived solely to keep an election promise. As a matter of fact on another occasion the Governor had opposed a diversion of funds. Republican opposition, on the other hand, was equally partisan and had a ring of sincerity only for those who had short memories. The party could not have been opposed to the principle of diversion, because as late as 1949 it had proposed the diverting of 11 million dollars in sales tax which had been earmarked to pay installments on Veterans Bonus Bonds. Ten years earlier a Republican Governor had proposed the diversion of highway funds. Nevertheless, they made opposition to diversion their major legislative effort of the session. They marshalled support from those high in business and finance who expressed their fear of the "dangerous precedent." Many small town legislators disliked diversion, because it was feared that the loss of revenue from the highway fund would delay the improvement of the secondary roads. These legislators saw reason to support diversion, however, when the Governor announced that the temporary increase of \$9.50 per pupil in state aid to education could be continued only by diversion. Ribicoff gave the Republicans the alternatives of accepting the proposal of devising a tax program of their own, or of assuming responsibility for the deficit which was almost sure to result if additional revenues were not forthcoming. The GOP offered ineffective opposition in the Senate, but took a determined stand in the House. The votes were evenly divided on three roll calls: one to recess, one to amend the bill, and one on the passage of the bill. Each time, William O'Brien, the Speaker of the House, cast the

deciding vote. Once again the Democrats' had successfully imposed party discipline. The Republicans were becoming more practiced: One Republican was sick, another was attending a convention. The *Courant* regarded the whole thing "as a matter of semantics, it is borrowing from Peter to pay Paul."¹²

The political gain or loss must remain a matter of conjecture at least until the 1962 Gubernatorial election. Serle Pinney, the House Minority Leader in 1959 and presently the Chairman of the Republican Party, indicated the Republican position when he scoffed at the Governor's financial gimmicks. Diversion remained an issue in the 1961 session. The Republicans spoke again and again of the horrors of diversion. They had regained control of the House and successfully blocked the continuance of diversion. An increase in taxes became a foregone conclusion. Even with the increase in taxes it was anticipated that a deficit would exceed twenty-five million by the next biennium. Whether Governor Dempsey, who had succeeded Ribicoff as Governor when he accepted the position as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, could overcome the political liability of the fiscal situation remained was a question as he prepared for his campaign.

Interstate Highway System

Closely bound to the discussion of diversion and indeed a part of the same bill was the proposal designed to accelerate the State's highway building program. Governor Ribicoff had proposed a "stepped up" highway program to the 1958 special session of the Assembly as an aid to recovery from the economic depression which then prevailed. The 30 million dollars granted by the Republican dominated assembly was a far cry, however, from what the Governor believed to be necessary, and in his inaugural in 1959, he asked that the Assembly take advantage of the Federal aid which was then anticipated and issue bonds to the extent of 346 millions to finance the program. The Governor held that by the use of Federal monies the final net cost to Connecticut, exclusive of interest, would amount to only 28 per cent of the total. There was logic in the Governor's argument that such construction represented a capital improvement and should be paid over a long period of time. There was

appeal in his suggestion that if the roads were built in the immediate future the State would avoid the higher prices which would result from the spiraling costs. The proposal was contrary to the Republican tradition of financing highways on a pay-as-you-go basis. Although for political reasons the GOP was bitterly opposed to diversion, it does not appear that their heart was in their opposition to the highway program. They expressed doubt that Federal monies would be available, and they raised questions as to the conditions under which the State would assume responsibility for the bridges of the Greater Hartford Bridge Authority, as required in the bill. When an amendment provided that the bridges should be financed out of funds collected from tolls, the opposition seemed to disappear. Significantly, among the strongest supporters of an improved highway system were some of the leading Republicans of the state. Thirty-eight million dollars were allocated for bond payments necessary to transfer the five bridges of the Hartford area to the state and the remainder of the funds granted were earmarked for the interstate system and the federal aid highway program. In the passage of the act there stood out one important political fact, that of intense citizen interest in the provision of roads which was not properly evaluated until Governor Dempsey dramatized it in 1961. The needs for highways were believed to be so great that Connecticut citizens were quite willing to support whatever method of financing would build the most miles of highway in the shortest possible time.¹³

Failure to Provide for Constitutional Convention

One of the more important issues before the Assembly was again the calling of a constitutional convention. In view of the political imbroglio which erupted in 1950 over the suggestion that a commission be named to draft a constitution and submit it directly to the people, it was recognized that if the constitution were to be revised it would have to be accomplished through the method of the convention. Inasmuch as "all political power is inherent in the . . . people and that they have at all times the undeniable and indefeasible right to alter their form of government in such manner as they may think expedient," it was assumed that they should be given the opportunity to indicate

through a referendum whether or not a constitutional convention were desired. The leadership of the Democratic party did not impose party discipline in the House, as it had in other legislative measures, to assure the passage of the bill authorizing the referendum. The Republicans added an amendment which would have required the convention to consist of the same number of representatives from each town. The proposal was distinctly favorable to the control of the Convention by the GOP. Inasmuch as the proposal denied the Democrats the opportunity to achieve a balance in representation in the convention to make possible a subsequent increase in the House of the proportion of representatives from the larger cities, they deleted the amendment when it reached the Senate. In their inability to compromise their differences, the parties refused to permit the electorate to decide if a constitutional convention should be called. The issue was submitted to a bi-partisan commission for study. The report submitted to the 1961 General Assembly failed to bridge the gap between political theory and practical politics. With the Republicans again in control of the House and the Democrats in control of the Senate, it proved impossible to agree upon the conditions under which a constitutional convention might be held and equally impossible to secure agreement on proposed constitutional amendments which would have altered the Senatorial districts and the size of the House. The reform of the basic structure of Connecticut government either by a constitutional convention or by any significant alteration in the basis of representation remains the political issue it has been for over 100 years.¹⁴

The Strain On Party Discipline

The unity which had characterized the Democratic forces during the session was strained in the course of legislative procedures. Some members had defied the wishes of the party leadership and had requested an increase in pay for the members of the Assembly. The rank and file were in a strong position. Their support was needed particularly in the House to effect the party's legislative program. When the move for increased salaries gained the support of some Republican members, the Democratic leaders agreed to an increase in the legislators' pay from

\$600 to \$2500 for a legislative term to be effective in 1961 and also reluctantly agreed to a grant of \$500 for expenses during the 1959 session. Although this was of personal benefit to many legislators, it was not of political advantage to them. The Governor's austerity program had eliminated from consideration many of the pet projects by which legislators customarily appeal to their local constituency and some members of the party were disgruntled as a result. During a discussion of the 57 million dollar bonding program which had gone on in the House for five hours, GOP Representative Lucy Hammer proposed an amendment adding \$800,000 to the total bond issue to finance a land purchase for the New Haven State Teachers College. The Majority Leader, Samuel Google left the floor to check the proposal with the party leaders. Bailey was not immediately available, but with the approval of the Governor, Google accepted the amendment on the erroneous assumption that it would gain some Republican votes for the amended bill. However, the vote on the bill was along strict party lines. Many Democrats were furious at Google. They had been denied monies for local projects, and yet in a moment of decision Google, with the approval of the Governor, had agreed to an expenditure of \$800,000. John Bailey was visibly upset by the agreement and by this intrusion of the Governor into an area usually reserved to the Party Chairman. Late on the night of May 28, after the House had adjourned, the Democrats gathered in caucus. Bailey sought to restore party harmony by assuring the members that the bonds for New Haven would never be authorized during the coming biennium by the Bonding Commission. They were ultimately authorized in 1962. The party rallied behind Google and excused his action, but to the discomfort of the New Britain lawmaker, there was criticism from the press in New Britain and from the President of the State College in New Britain for favoring the New Haven institution while doing nothing for the college in his own city. Left unexplained was why \$800,000 was provided for the purchase of the property when only \$350,000 was recommended for this item in the Governor's budget.¹⁵

Insurance Taxes

The most notable exception to the Governor's avowal that there would be no increase in taxes was an assessment against the insurance

companies. The industry agreed for the tax on interest and dividends to be increased from one and one-quarter to two and one-half per cent for the 1959-61 biennium and then gradual reduction was to be begun with an eventual elimination in 1972. The tax on premiums and annuities was increased from one-quarter of one per cent to one per cent for the forthcoming year and then was to be gradually reduced until it was eliminated in 1963. It was estimated that the agreement with the insurance companies would net the state approximately \$5,000,000 in two years. Other legislation of advantage to the industry was passed which at least in part compensated the companies for the increase in taxes. The bill permitted Connecticut chartered life insurance companies to buy common stock in certain pension, retirement, profit sharing portfolios, thereby removing an eight per cent limitation of the total of the admitted assets and removing an advantage enjoyed by the trust companies since 1950. The *Courant* endorsed the legislation as being of benefit to free enterprise and to the nation's stock market.¹⁶

The Legislative Balance

There was a sense of history in the air as Connecticut's legislators assembled for the adjournment ceremonies shortly after the midnight of June 3. The Governor reminded the assemblage that it had legislated "not only for the moment but for the benefit of many generations to come." The changes in the minor courts, the elimination of county government, and the reorganization of the Departments of the state government were notable achievements. The provisions for the highway program were both imaginative and daring. The provisions for retarded children was recognition of a sorely neglected social problem. The first Democratic controlled Assembly in 83 years had achieved more than it had dared hope for when the session began, yet its failure to enable the people to make the decision on the calling of a constitutional convention was a failure in an objective long associated with the Democratic Party. The changes were many and some of the reforms significant, but in achieving its successes the party had introduced some fiscal practices which might become political liabilities. These, however, were not immediately discernible in 1959. The Democratic leadership had completely dominated the entire session. The Republican leadership was no match

for the well coordinated Democratic team headed by John Bailey and Abraham Ribicoff. They had added to the prestige they had achieved by a smashing political victory by achieving too a comprehensive legislative program. Their dominance of Connecticut politics was sure to attract national attention.

President Makers

The Democratic Party in Connecticut was catapulted to a new position of importance in national politics with the election of John F. Kennedy as President in 1960. Governor Ribicoff had identified Kennedy as a possible winner as early as the 1956 National Convention when he served as a floor manager for the Massachusetts Senator in his effort to secure the nomination for Vice President. Their relations remained close, and, as the preliminaries of the 1960 Presidential campaign developed, it became clear that not only Ribicoff, but John Bailey and others of the Democratic leaders in the State, were to play important roles in the effort to nominate and elect John F. Kennedy. Ribicoff made frequent public appearances for the presidential hopeful, and in the contest for delegates Bailey was reported as particularly adept in dealing with party leaders. As Chairman of the Platform Committee, Chester Bowles was given the responsibility of presenting to the American people the idea and the ideals by which the Democratic Party and its candidate would be identified. Once Kennedy's nomination was assured and the campaign was begun, Connecticut Democratic leaders appeared to serve with other national leaders as a part of the strategy team and separately in the areas of their greatest competence: Bailey as consultant on organizational problems, Ribicoff as a spokesman for the nominee, and Bowles as an advisor in the area of foreign affairs. Their services together with the 90,000 plurality returned for Kennedy in Connecticut assured state Democrats important positions in the national administration. Bowles was named Undersecretary of State; Ribicoff Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare; and Bailey as Democratic National Chairman.

The Ribicoff Record

Abraham Ribicoff symbolized to a remarkable degree the spirit of moderation which characterized Connecticut at mid-century. While con-

juring up the image of a progressive leader, he approached public issues, particularly those which necessitated new taxes, with a measured caution. In concepts and ideas, he was the beneficiary of the programs articulated by Wilbur Cross and Chester Bowles. The end results of his efforts were somewhere between the objectives of these Democratic predecessors. In the art of achieving goals, his only peer was his colleague, John Bailey. If Ribicoff did not undertake programs advocated by the liberal elements of society, it could be contended that the reforms achieved represented the limits of acceptance of the Connecticut community. As he trod "the middle of the road" and collected votes, he committed his party to the same path, robbed it of the virility of its liberal wing, and thereby hastened the drift of Connecticut politics toward dead center. A dichotomy between these realities and appearances seemed to increase as his image grew to national proportions.

The future historian is likely to find Ribicoff a study of contrasts. While assuming the posture of being above politics, he played the game with a stark realism seldom equaled on the Connecticut scene. He called for austerity in fiscal affairs, but recommended ways and means, which, to his opponents at least, reduced the plea to a political verbalism. When his party was not in control of the Assembly, he appeared as the paragon of bi-partisanship. When it was, he was capable of being beligerently uncompromising. He was responsible, to a great degree, for the rise of John Dempsey within the Democratic party, yet after the announcement of Ribicoff's nomination to Federal office, for the announced intent to avoid appearing presumptuous, he held the gubernatorial reins so tightly as to jeopardize Dempsey's opportunity to emerge in his own right as a worthy successor. Abraham Ribicoff led his party to the greatest victory in the history of modern Connecticut, but in the process he incurred liabilities which the electorate, it would appear, will balance.

NOTES — CHAPTER XXXVIII

1. *Hartford Courant*, Mar. 1, 1959.
2. *Ibid.*, Mar. 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 1959.
3. *Ibid.*, Mar. 13, 15, 17, 20, 25, 26, 1959; *Journal of the House*, 1959, Part 1, pp. 611-644; *Journal of the Senate*, 1959, Part 1, pp. 516-19; *Public Acts*, 1959, pp. 35-118.

4. *Hartford Courant*, Apr. 19, May 10, 1959.
5. *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, May 20, 21, 28, June 11, 1961.
6. *Journal of the Senate*, 1959, Part 2, pp. 726, 870, 1066; *Journal of the House*, 1959, Part 2, pp. 1050-70; *Public Acts*, 1959, pp. 442-89; *Hartford Courant*, Apr. 19, May 3, 7, 9, 1959; interview with Secretary of State Ella T. Grasso, Jan. 31, 1962.
7. *Hartford Courant*, Mar. 3, 4, June 2, 1959.
8. *Journal of the House*, 1957, pp. 38, 1724; *Report of the Legislative Council*, 1958, p. 82.
9. *Digest of Administrative Reports*, 1959-60 (Hartford, 1960), p. 187; *Public Acts*, 1959, pp. 425-39; *Hartford Courant*, Mar. 3, 6, 11, Apr. 2, 17, May 1, 16, June 3, 1959.
10. *Digest of Administrative Reports*, 1959-60, pp. 111, 115, 147, 279; *Public Acts*, 1959, pp. 648-60, 758-71, 907, 1280-81; *Public Acts*, 1961, pp. 37-38, 64; *Journal of the House*, 1959, pp. 92, 302, 306, 493, 740, 775, 778, 786, 939.
11. *Public Acts*, 1959, pp. 437-39, 747-49, 1325-27; *Digest of Administrative Reports*, 1961, pp. 200-201; *Hartford Courant*, June 4, 1959, Feb. 10, 1962.
12. *Journal of the House*, 1959, pp. 984-96; *Hartford Courant*, Apr. 1, 5, 17, 19, 26, May 1, 3, 5, 6, 16, 31, 1959.
13. *Ibid.*, Apr. 4, 17, 28, May 5, 1959; *Journal of the House*, Special Session, 1958, pp. 16-19, 80, 144-451; *Journal of the House*, 1959, pp. 40-41, 449-51, 466, 959, 977, 996, 1238; *Public Acts*, 1959, pp. 219-20; *Digest of Administrative Reports*, p. 227.
14. *Journal of the House*, 1959, pp. 204, 257, 380, 470, 518, 1463; *Journal of the House*, 1961, pp. 772, 1045, 1253, 1408, 1424; *Journal of the Senate*, 1959, pp. 245, 277, 338, 1236; *Journal of the Senate*, 1961, pp. 135, 587, 681, 839, 912, 938; *Hartford Courant*, May 3, 5, 24, June 2, 1959, June 11, 1961.
15. *Ibid.*, Mar. 5, Apr. 2, 3, May 16, 29, June 2, 1959; *New Britain Herald*, May 16, 1959.
16. *Hartford Courant*, May 16, 22, 1959; *Public Acts*, 1959, pp. 411-12.

Chapter XXXIX

The Current Scene

JOHN DEMPSEY succeeded to the responsibilities of Governor overshadowed by the image of the man to whom he was responsible for his own ascendancy within the Democratic Party. This native of Ireland served his apprenticeship in Connecticut politics in his adopted town of Putnam, where he served as Mayor for six terms and from which he was elected to the General Assembly for three successive terms, the first being in 1949. He was appointed Executive Aide to the Governor in 1955 and was his personal choice as nominee for Lieutenant Governor in 1958. The General Assembly went through its routine duties awaiting the departure of Ribicoff on January 17. His influence persisted. In his inaugural Dempsey paid tribute to the departed Secretary, but the substance of the message left the impression, inevitably perhaps, that Dempsey was still the Lieutenant, not the Chief of State.¹

A Stumbling Start

More important, perhaps, the Democratic Party was consigned to a kind of guardianship. The absence of the master craftsman, John Bailey, was felt keenly. For a dozen years he had directed the legislative efforts of the party with consummate skill. Now, his duties as National Chairman kept him away from his familiar post except for infrequent visits to Hartford. Arthur Healey of New Haven and the Secretary of State, Ella Grasso, were designated to run the affairs of the party in his absence. The Republicans eagerly took advantage of the situation and seized the initiative in the Assembly. Some Democrats complained that there was no leadership, and others, not easily identified, sought to take

advantage of the transition in the party and weaken the hold of the Bailey-Ribicoff forces. The rank and file of the party had been drifting for almost a month when Bailey returned in the middle of February; and out of the emergency meetings, Dempsey emerged as the leader of the Party on legislative affairs.²

The Governor got off to a stumbling start. He indicated that he was willing to permit the people to decide if horse racing should be introduced in the State. In indicating his support of the democratic principle of permitting the people to decide, he appeared to support a measure which was antithetical to Connecticut's concept of morality. When it appeared that the Governor's detractors might be successful in identifying the racing bill as symbolic of the level of conduct of Dempsey in public office, John Bailey announced simply to a Democratic caucus that no racing bill would be presented and none was. The Governor was rescued from an embarrassing and potentially hazardous political situation.³

The New Haven

Of immediate importance was legislation designed to grant assistance to the New Haven Railroad. The road had recovered from its depressed condition in the nineteen thirties largely as a result of the increased revenues received during World War II. In the post-war years New England's major railroad passed through a series of financial crises and managerial changes, but none had resulted in any permanent improvements in the system. The financial condition of the road had deteriorated to such a point by the Fall of 1960 that it was announced that, if assistance were not forthcoming, the road would be forced to curtail its services and possibly to go into bankruptcy. Meanwhile the company continued operating with loans from private sources and from the Federal Government. A committee, which had been named by the executives of the states of New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, recommended in January, 1961, the repeal of the Federal excise tax, a ten per cent increase in commutation fares, and immediate tax relief by the respective states. The Governor asked that the road "be given immediate assistance" and endorsed the proposal to repeal the gross revenue tax on the railroad.⁴

There developed a strong sentiment that any relief should be reflected in improved services by the road. The Governor favored this, but the conditions under which tax relief should be granted were first detailed by Nicholas B. Eddy of New Hartford, and he gained the support of the *Hartford Courant*. "It is silly for the State to grant tax relief," editorialized the paper, "without some assurance that these monies will be used to strengthen the road." In addition to improved maintenance of the road beds and rolling stock, Eddy suggested that the executive salaries be reduced and that the railroad assure the public that at least 50 per cent of the trains run on time. Eugene S. Loughlin, chairman of the Connecticut Public Utilities Commission, criticized the line for many of its management decisions, but held that bankruptcy was not the answer to the problem. The President of the New Haven, George Alpert, made a grandiloquent appeal that Connecticut act to save the line and urged that Connecticut take the lead in granting relief. Despite his urging and that of the Governor, the Assembly moved pretty much at its own pace. Sentiment developed that Connecticut should not rush to grant tax relief before it was known whether other states would also.⁵

Finally the Assembly voted tax relief without waiting for action in other states. The bill cleared the Senate March 15, and, under suspension of the rules, passed the House the next day. The exemptions were granted on the condition that they result in the continuation of essential services, the improvement thereof over present levels, and the rehabilitation and improvement of the plant and equipment. Railroads whose net operating income was less than eight per cent of the gross earnings were exempt from taxes. Taxes on earnings in excess of that amount were graduated with those showing an operating income of more than 18 per cent to pay three and one-half per cent on gross earnings. This favorable legislation notwithstanding, and, despite repeated loans advanced by the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Assembly had hardly adjourned when the New Haven went into bankruptcy and there exists considerable evidence that the tax savings were not reflected in improvements in the road.⁶

No one seemed to have an answer for the New Haven. It had come into being as a consolidated network in the wild speculative years of the

last part of the nineteenth century. During its years of monopolistic control, insufficient funds were made available for capital improvements and the road fell into ill repair. It failed to adopt progressive policies even when the motor truck industry challenged its monopoly. Maladies later characteristic of the road were evident during the crisis of the twenties and the thirties, but the railroad, and the communities which it served, vetoed major reorganization, chose to follow an independent course of action, and depended on the revenues of a wartime commerce to postpone what it now seems was inevitable. In its long history, the practices of the road belied those generally identified as good management. It is true, on the other hand, that as New England continued to develop as a highly specialized industrial area the character of the commerce had altered markedly, and it is likewise true that organized labor was demanding a larger share of the gross earnings of the road. It may be conjectured, however, if the challenges to the New Haven were greater than to other industries. There are those who suggest that passenger service over railroads can continue only by public subsidy, or as a government function. The opinion is growing that further Federal Assistance will be forthcoming only if some type of governmental supervision is established for the administration of the road. Members of Connecticut's General Assembly apparently agreed that "the maintenance and improvement of the service by railroads . . . is a public purpose." And that taxes were exempted to achieve this public benefit. The future of the road is not clear. Whether in the long run the railroad could be operated under the aegis of private enterprise for a profit, seems problematical.

Labor and Politics

There had developed an apparent stiffening in opposition to increasing unemployment compensation benefits for labor. It was proposed in the 1959 session that the maximum for jobless pay benefits be increased from 45 dollars a week to 50 per cent of the average wage in the State; that the period of benefits be fixed at 26 weeks, instead of ranging from eight to 26 weeks; and that the coverage be extended to include employers of two or more persons. The Republicans offered only token opposition in the Senate, but in the House they caught the Democrats with-

out their full membership present and defeated the bill. Labor leaders were stunned. They had been strong supporters of the Democratic party and there were many labor representatives in the House. In an effort to salvage the bill, and to remain in the good graces of labor, the Democrats resubmitted a bill, shorn of most of its significant features, and then passed it in the House by the narrow margin of two votes.⁷ The Republican Party in 1961 turned down a Democratic measure containing essentially the same characteristics as the bill which failed in 1959 and proposed an increase in unemployment compensation from 45 to 48 dollars a week. It did not provide a basis for compromise, however, inasmuch it was coupled with a provision that one-half of social security payments and one-half of the pension fund paid by the workers was to be deducted from jobless pay checks. Since this was unacceptable to labor, jobless pay legislation remained essentially unchanged.⁸ The Legislature voted, however, to take advantage of the federal emergency program providing extra jobless benefits while retaining the essential characteristics of the State's program.⁹

Important changes were made in other labor legislation. The compensatory benefits to workers were extended and increased. Workers' compensation was made applicable in 1959 to employers of two or more, the time required to lapse before benefits were made collectable from the third rather than the seventh day, the maximum benefit was raised from 45 dollars a week to 55 per cent of the State's average production wage, and in 1961 the law was extended to cover 12 specific body injuries. Of greater significance perhaps, was the increase in the minimum wage from \$1.00 to \$1.25.¹⁰

Notwithstanding the legislation enacted, the view prevailed in 1961 that substantial gains for labor had been blocked for the first time in many years. It was reported that "organized labor received only a fraction of the legislation unions sought." The biggest disappointment was the failure to make any changes in the jobless pay law. This disappointment was more bitter because of the failure to make any changes in 1959 when the Democrats controlled both houses of the Assembly and Ribicoff was still Governor. It is this, and the failure of the State to negotiate effectively the labor differences between Pratt and Whitney Aircraft and Sikorsky Aircraft and their respective employees, that pro-

vides the basis for Congressman Frank Kowalski's challenge of Ribicoff for the Democratic nomination for the United States Senate, but the extent of the discontent in terms of political importance remains to be demonstrated as the contest progresses.¹¹

Legislation for a Modern Society

An effort to make the election laws accord with the needs of a modern society was reflected in amendments to the constitution which received first round approval by the Assembly as required by the Constitution. What indeed might prove to be a stroke at the Republicans' cherished home rule was contained in the proposal to deny town officials the exclusive privilege of determining the qualifications for voting. An amendment to pair the Governor and Lieutenant Governor on the ballot in a manner which would insure that the successful candidates would be of the same party was recognition of the increased importance of the executive branch. Other amendments were approved which recognized the increasing mobility of the population. If finally approved, voters *in absentia* would be able to cast their vote for constitutional amendments, and those overseas in the employ of the government would be admitted as voters *in absentia*. Also a voter in the state who moved from one town to another would not have to take a test in order to become a voter at his new residence.¹²

In its refusal to provide funds for the Board of Education to assume responsibility for providing educational television, while extending funds to a private association organized for a similar purpose, the State seemed to indicate a preference for reliance upon private efforts to spearhead novel undertakings. Despite the fact that educational television channels had been granted to Connecticut, the Legislature consistently refused to vote the monies necessary to begin a program. As a result and on the assumption that a private organization could activate educational television more effectively and more cheaply, there was organized in 1959 a non-profit organization for this purpose. It was assumed that monies would be provided by private contributions, but at the end of two years the program was not in operation and it appeared desirable to apply to the State for assistance. The State Board of Education was authorized

to expend \$50,000 for the purchase of educational programs to be used in direct classroom instruction. In the last days of the session of the 1961 assembly there was introduced and approved, apparently without the knowledge of the Department of Education, legislation granting an additional \$200,000 for educational television. The merits of educational television in Connecticut are yet to be demonstrated, but the State had embarked upon an interesting experiment. Inasmuch as the Board of Directors of the private association was self perpetuating, the power to determine that which is taught in the public schools through the medium of television is removed from the citizen control which is characteristic of American education. Then, too, the State, after abdicating its responsibility to maintain control of an educational service for the public, provided what appears to be the major support for the independent private association.¹³

Some of the most significant legislation involved changes in the ancient settlement law. Although the law had been somewhat liberalized in recent years, it continued to fail to meet the needs of an increasingly mobile population. Incidents arising from the importation of a number of domestic workers highlighted the inadequacies of the law. Upon the recommendation of a special commission headed by Dr. Edward M. Cohart of Yale, settlement was eliminated as a basis for welfare assistance. In addition, an interstate compact was authorized which permitted the state to enter into agreements with other states for the care of citizens of the respective states on a reciprocal basis.¹⁴

Dempsey Gains the Initiative

Until a dramatic development, fashioned largely by the Governor himself, John Dempsey seemed destined to be remembered in history only as the person who completed Ribicoff's second term. Although Dempsey had moved swiftly in support of the New Haven, the railroad hardly held a position in public affection upon which a political career could be furthered. Then, too, legislation in the Assembly remained at a standstill. Veteran political observers shook their heads sorrowfully over the likeable Irishman inheriting such an impossible political situation. Whispers were heard that he might move on to Washing-

ton, others that he might move back to Putnam. Either of these might still be true, but condolences were premature. Citizen's groups from every part of the State had appeared at the Capital urging that roads be built in some particular area, but their pleas seemed in vain because of the lack of funds. The Governor unexpectedly in the early part of May proposed that 90 miles of roads be built in addition to those already authorized. The plan would benefit thirty-five communities and would cost 150 millions of dollars. It was predicated on the continuance of the diversion of highway fees as surety against which bonds would be issued as necessary to complete the roads in four years. The Republican leaders called it a "wild country sleigh ride" and prematurely predicted defeat for the plan. Peter Mariani, the Minority Leader in the Senate, feared borrowing more money. Tyler Patterson, the Majority Leader in the House, was quoted as being ready to vote on the Governor's proposal three days after it was suggested. It appeared to the Chairman of the Republican Party that the plan was a vote building measure. It was. The Republican counter proposal did not, however, have comparable appeal. They proposed to build the same roads in six years on the familiar "pay as you go" basis and claimed that this would save the State \$75,000,000 in interest charges. The Governor had seized the initiative and exploited it by demanding a public hearing. He insisted that the roads were too important a question for the political leaders to decide without listening to public opinion. When an estimated 600 persons jammed the House on May 18, it was evident that the Governor had judged correctly the temper of the people, just how correctly was confirmed when leading Republicans appeared in support of the proposal. When the House convened the next day it was apparent that the Republicans were in favor of building roads but were against issuing bonds. The impact of the Governor's proposal had been so great that obviously it would have been political suicide for anyone to have stood in absolute opposition. It is out of such realities that political issues are compromised. The agreement was principally in accord with Governor Dempsey's terms. Thirty year bonds were to be issued for the building of about ninety miles of roads in four years. To make it possible to end diversion, as the Republicans had demanded, motor vehicle fees were increased from eight to ten dollars. The Governor looked confidently

toward resolving the major issues still pending before the legislature and perhaps more confidently to becoming Governor in his own right.¹⁵

Budget and Taxes

The fiscal policies, the issues out of which political parties in Connecticut biennially seek to gain the greatest advantage, were most difficult for the Dempsey Administration. Not only had Ribicoff's austerity program resulted in a deficit of 14 million, but it had resulted in the neglect of many services which could no longer be postponed. The new Governor recommended for the biennium a general fund budget of 589.2 million, Republicans were sure they could reduce this amount and proceeded to prepare their own plan for expending the State's revenues. When this was presented, the Democrats were equally certain that the Governor's proposal was better. After each party and its individual members had attempted to gain all the political advantage possible before the adjournment of the Assembly, the party leaders took over and agreed on the highest operating budget in history. Governor Dempsey claimed it would produce a deficit of 25 million dollars, but the Republican Majority Leaders in the House responded "Baloney." A bonding program of 67 million dollars was arrived at by the same procedure. An important variance in the two versions was the monies provided by the Republicans for the State Colleges. The two million dollars provided for the beginning of a medical-dental school in Hartford was the culmination of many years of effort.¹⁶

Of even greater potential political significance was the tax program which was voted to continue and extend services of the State. Additional taxes were voted which it was estimated would result in approximately 125 million in new revenue. These taxes included an increase in the sales tax from three to three and one-half per cent, an increase in the cigarette tax from three to five cents a pack, a doubling of the liquor tax, and a substantial increase in the business tax. The Democrats held the view that the continuation of established services and the demands for additional ones made increased taxes inevitable. The Republicans sought to lay the increases to fiscal folly and to create the impression that they had yielded reluctantly.¹⁷

In Connecticut, as elsewhere, budget and taxes frequently cause the tides upon which one rides to political success and another is washed to political oblivion. As politics is played in Connecticut, each party seeks to identify itself as the party capable of providing more services at less cost than its opponent. It frequently results that the party not in control of the Executive branch insists upon a budget for which there most likely will not be adequate funds. The thinking behind such seemingly irresponsible tactics is that inasmuch as the Governor is responsible for balancing the budget, if at the end of the biennium a deficit exists, the incumbent might be portrayed to the electorate as an ineffective executive who does not warrant their continued confidence on election day. If taxes are increased to avoid a deficit, it is similarly assumed that the responsibility for such increases rests most heavily on the Governor. As the 1962 Gubernatorial campaign approached, it was evident that the Republicans were attempting to capitalize on both circumstances. The Governor, on the other hand, after attempting to cause the Republicans to assume joint responsibility for the tax increase, gave some evidence of being ready to introduce a tactic somewhat novel in political campaigning in economy minded Connecticut. He sought to direct the attention of the electorate to the new services the additional taxes were providing. The voters will render the ultimate decision and historians will evaluate the wisdom of the politicians' tactics.

NOTES—CHAPTER XXXIX

1. *Journal of the House*, 1961, pp. 333-41; *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 17, May 21, 28, June 4, 1961.
2. *Ibid.*, Feb. 15, 1961.
3. *Ibid.*, June 11, 1961.
4. *Ibid.*, Jan. 22, 1961; *Journal of the House*, 1961, p. 339.
5. *Hartford Courant*, Feb. 2, 6, 9, 10, 1961.
6. *Journal of the House*, 1961, pp. 630-31; *Journal of the Senate*, 1961, pp. 550-51.
7. *Ibid.*, 1959, pp. 1055, 1180; *Journal of the House*, 1959, pp. 1763-77, 1813, 1924-35; *Public Acts*, 1959, pp. 1347-50; *Hartford Courant*, May 23, 29, June 4, 1959.
8. *Hartford Courant*, June 2, 8, 11, 1961.
9. *Ibid.*, June 8, 1961.
10. *Ibid.*, May 23, June 4, 1959, June 8, 11, 1961.

11. *Ibid.*, June 11, 1961.
12. *Ibid.*; *Public Acts*, 1961, pp. 925-36.
13. *Hartford Courant*, Mar. 4, 1959, May 3, 1961.
14. *Ibid.*, June 1, 1961; *Public Acts*, 1961, pp. 544-47.
15. *Journal of the House*, 1961, pp. 1021-1221; *Hartford Courant*, May 10, 11, 13, 15, 19, 20, 23, June 2, 4, 7, 1961.
16. *Hartford Courant*, May 3, 19, 20, 27, June 2, 3, 8, 1961.
17. *Hartford Courant*, May 14, June 6, 8, 11, 1962.

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